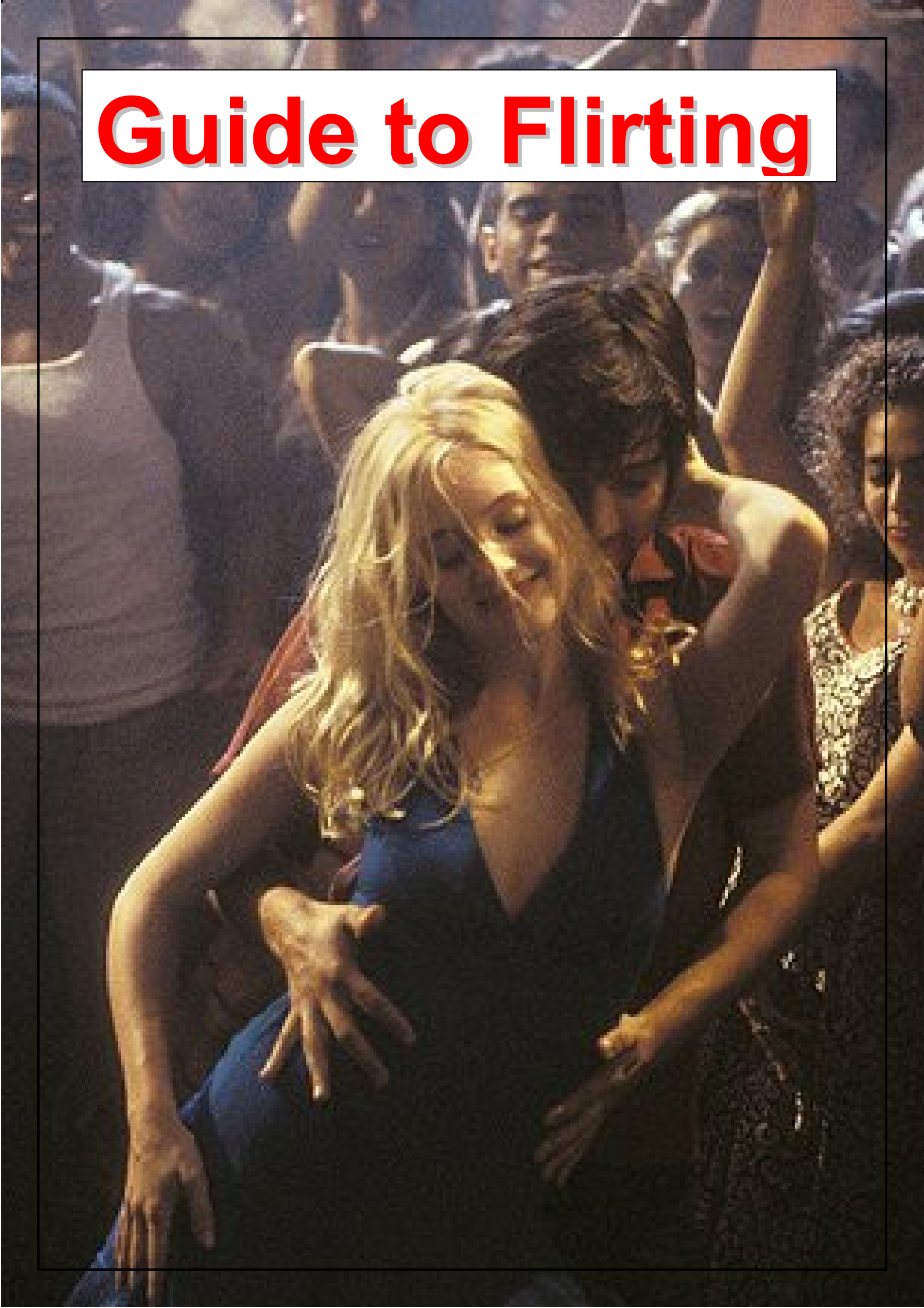


# Guide to Flirting



# Guide to Flirting

## *What Social Science can tell you about flirting and how to do it*

### Why do we flirt?



Flirting is much more than just a bit of fun: it is a universal and essential aspect of human interaction. Anthropological research shows that flirting is to be found, in some form, in all cultures and societies around the world.

Flirting is a basic instinct, part of human nature. This is not surprising: if we did not initiate contact and express interest in members of the opposite sex, we would not progress to reproduction, and the human species would become extinct.

According to some evolutionary psychologists, flirting may even be the foundation of civilisation as we know it. They argue that the large human brain – our superior intelligence, complex language, everything that distinguishes us from animals – is the equivalent of the peacock's tail: a courtship device evolved to attract and retain sexual partners. Our achievements in everything from art to rocket science may be merely a side-effect of the essential ability to charm.

### **If flirting is instinctive, why do we need this Guide?**

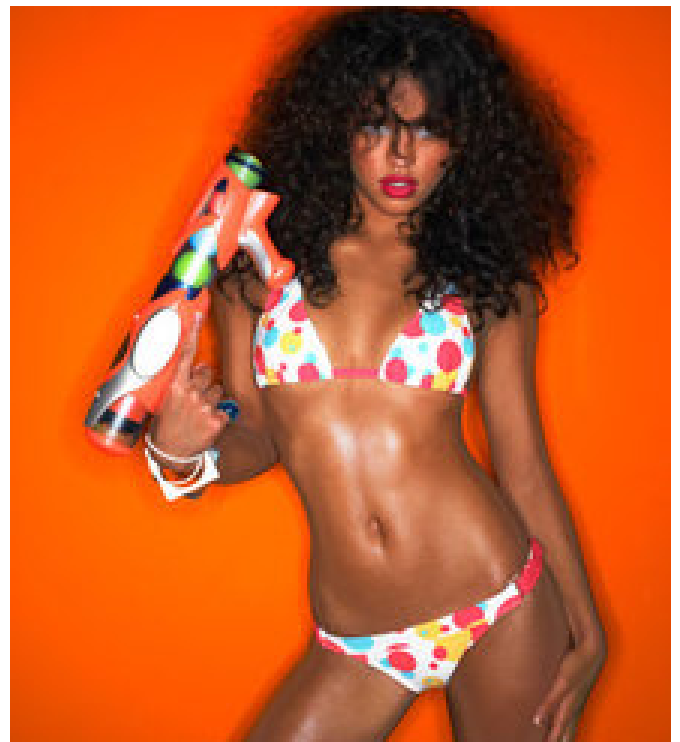
Like every other human activity, flirting is governed by a complex set of unwritten laws of etiquette. These rules dictate where, when, with whom and in what manner we flirt. We generally obey these unofficial laws instinctively, without being conscious of doing so.

We only become aware of the rules when someone commits a breach of this etiquette – by flirting with the wrong person, perhaps, or at an inappropriate time or place. Chatting up a widow at her husband's funeral, for example, would at the very least incur disapproval, if not serious distress or anger.

This is a very obvious example, but the more complex and subtle aspects of flirting etiquette can be confusing – and most of us have made a few embarrassing mistakes. Research shows that men find it particularly difficult to interpret the more subtle cues in women's body-language, and tend to mistake friendliness for sexual interest.

Another problem is that in some rather Puritanical cultures, such as Britain and North America, flirting has acquired a bad name. Some of us have become so worried about causing offence or sending the wrong signals that we are in danger of losing our natural talent for playful, harmless flirtation.

So, to save the human race from extinction, and preserve the foundations of civilisation, Martini commissioned Kate Fox at the Social Issues Research Centre to review and analyse all the scientific research material on interaction between the sexes, and produce a definitive guide to the art and etiquette of enjoyable flirting.



Psychologists and social scientists have spent many years studying every detail of social intercourse between men and women. Until now, their fascinating findings have been buried in obscure academic journals and heavy tomes full of jargon and footnotes. This Guide is the first to reveal this important information to a popular audience, providing expert advice on where to flirt, who to flirt with and how to do it.

## **Where to flirt**



### **Parties**

Flirting is most socially acceptable at parties, celebrations and social occasions/functions. At some such events (e.g. Christmas/New Year parties) a degree of flirtatious behaviour is not only socially sanctioned, but almost expected.

This is because most parties, celebrations, carnivals and festivals are governed by a special code of behaviour which anthropologists call 'cultural remission' – a temporary, structured relaxation of normal social controls and restrictions.

This might just sound like a fancy way of saying 'letting your hair down', but it isn't. 'Cultural remission' does not mean abandoning all your inhibitions, letting rip and behaving exactly as you please. There are rules of behaviour at even the wildest carnival – although they may involve a complete reversal of normal, everyday social etiquette. Flirtatious behaviour which is normally frowned upon may be actively required, and prissy refusal to participate may incur disapproval.

### **Drinking-places**

Flirting is also socially acceptable in some public settings, usually where alcohol is served – such as bars, pubs, night-clubs, discos, wine bars, restaurants, etc. One survey showed that 27% of British couples first met their current partner in a pub, and alcohol was voted the most effective aid to flirting by respondents in the Martini Flirting Survey.

Flirting in drinking-places is, however, subject to more conditions and restrictions than at parties. In pubs, for example, the area around the bar counter is universally understood to be the 'public zone', where initiating conversation with a stranger is acceptable, whereas sitting at a table usually indicates a greater desire for privacy. Tables furthest from the bar counter are the most 'private' zones.

As a rule-of-thumb, the more food-oriented establishments or 'zones' tend to discourage flirting between strangers, while those dedicated to drinking or dancing offer more socially sanctioned flirting opportunities. Restaurants and food-oriented or 'private' zones within drinking-places are more conducive to flirting between established partners.

### **Learning-places**

Schools, colleges, universities and other educational establishments are hot-beds of flirting. This is largely because they are full of young single people making their first attempts at mate selection.

Learning-places are also particularly conducive to flirting because the shared lifestyle and concerns of students, and the informal atmosphere, make it easy for them to initiate conversation with each other. Simply by being students, flirting partners automatically have a great deal in common, and do not need to struggle to find topics of mutual interest.





Flirting is officially somewhat more restricted in learning-places than in drinking-places, as education is supposed to take priority over purely social concerns, but in many cases the difference is not very noticeable. Taking a course or evening class may in fact provide more opportunities for relaxed, enjoyable flirting than frequenting bars and night-clubs.

### **Workplace**

At work, flirting is usually acceptable only in certain areas, with certain people and at specific times or occasions. There are no universal laws: each workplace or working environment has its own unwritten etiquette governing flirtatious behaviour.

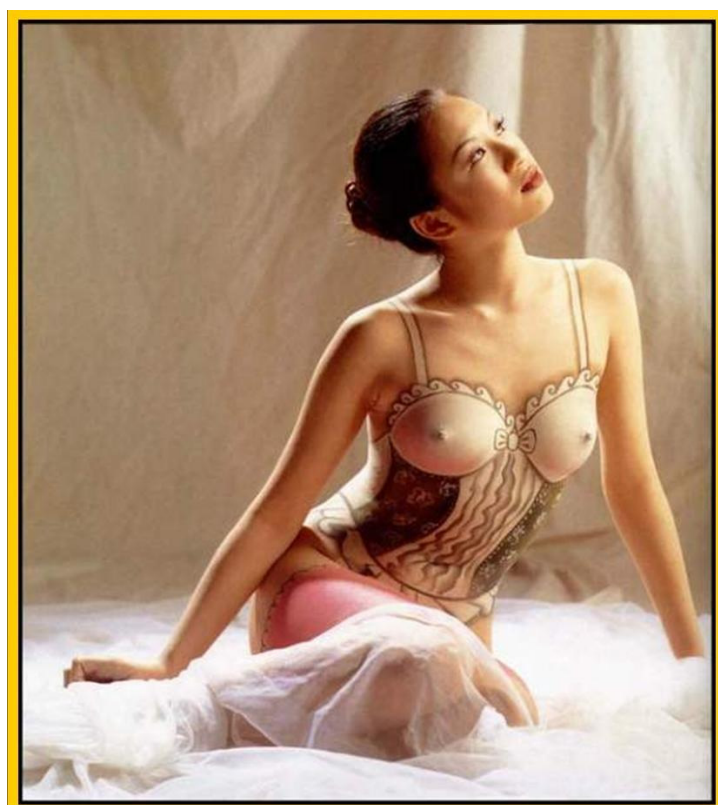
In some companies, the coffee machine or cafeteria may be the unofficial 'designated flirting zones', other companies may frown on any flirting during office hours, or between managers and staff, while some may have a long-standing tradition of jokingly flirtatious morning greetings.

Careful observation of colleagues is the best way to discover the unspoken flirting etiquette of your own workplace – but make sure that you are guided by the behaviour of the most highly regarded individuals in the company, not the office 'clown', 'groper' or 'bimbo'.

### **Participant sports/hobbies**

Almost any participant sport or hobby can involve flirting. The level of flirtatious behaviour, however, often tends to be inversely related to the standards achieved by participants and their enthusiasm for the activity.

You will generally find a lot of flirting among incompetent tennis players, unfit swimmers, cack-handed potters, etc., but somewhat less among more proficient, serious, competitive participants in the same activities. There are of course exceptions to this rule, but before joining a team or club, it is worth trying to find out if the members have burning ambitions to play in the national championships or win prestigious awards for their handiwork. If you are mainly looking for flirting opportunities, avoid these high-flying groups, and seek out clubs full of happy, sociable under-achievers.



### **Spectator events**

Although they have the advantage of providing conversation topics of mutual interest, most sporting events and other spectator pastimes such as theatre or cinema are not particularly conducive to flirting, as social interaction is not the primary purpose of the occasion, and social contact may be limited to a short interval or require 'missing the action'.

The most striking exception to this rule is horseracing, where all the 'action' takes place in just a few minutes, the half-hour interval between races is dedicated to sociability, and friendly interaction between strangers is actively encouraged by racecourse etiquette. In fact, our own recent research on the behaviour of racegoers indicates that the 'social micro-climate' of the racecourse makes it one of the best flirting environments in Britain.

## Who to flirt with

### 'Flirting for fun'



At one level, you can flirt with more or less anyone. An exchange of admiring glances or a bit of light-hearted flirtatious banter can brighten the day, raise self-esteem and strengthen social bonds. Flirtation at this level is harmless fun, and only the stuffiest killjoys could possibly have any objections.

Clearly, it makes sense to exercise a degree of caution with people who are married or attached. Most people in long-term relationships can cope with a bit of admiration, and may even benefit from knowing that others find them or their partners attractive, but couples differ in their tolerance of flirtatious behaviour, and it is important to be alert to signs of discomfort or distress.

Research has also shown that men have a tendency to mistake friendly behaviour for sexual flirting. This is not because they are stupid or deluded, but because they tend to see the world in more sexual terms than women. There is also evidence to suggest that women are naturally more socially skilled than men, better at interpreting people's behaviour and responding appropriately. Indeed, scientists have recently claimed that women have a special 'diplomacy gene' which men lack.

This means that women need to be particularly careful to avoid sending ambiguous signals in interactions with married men, and men need to be aware that married/attached males may misinterpret friendly behaviour towards their wives/girlfriends. Otherwise, light-hearted flirtation is both harmless and enjoyable.

### 'Flirting with intent'

But flirting is also an essential element of the mate-selection process, and when you are 'flirting with intent', rather than just 'flirting for fun', you need to be a bit more selective about your choice of target.

In mate-selection flirting, there are two basic rules about who to flirt with that will increase your chances of success and reduce the likelihood of embarrassing rejections.

#### **1. Do initiate flirtation with people of roughly the same level of attractiveness as yourself**

This will give you the best chance of compatibility. Most successful marriages and long-term relationships are between partners of more or less equal good looks. There is some leeway, of course, and other qualities are also important, but statistically, relationships where one partner is much more attractive than the other tend to be less successful. Studies have shown that the more evenly matched partners are in their attractiveness, the more likely they are to stay together.

But evaluating your own attractiveness may be difficult. Research has shown that many women have a poor body-image, and often underestimate their attractiveness. Some recent studies indicate, for example, that up to 80% of adult women believe that they are too fat, and try to achieve a figure that is around two sizes smaller than the body-size men find most desirable. If you are female, the odds are that you are more attractive than you think, so try flirting with some better-looking men.

Men generally tend to be less critical of their own physical appearance than women. This is partly because standards of beauty for males are much less rigid than for females, and a wider variety of shapes and features are considered attractive. But it must be said that some men are also inclined to overestimate their attractiveness. If you are a more honest male, and do not consider yourself good-looking, remember that most men lack expertise in the subtleties of social interaction, so polishing up your flirting skills could give you the edge over a more attractive rival.

## **2. Don't flirt with people who are unlikely to return your interest.**

Even if you are not looking for a long-term mate, you will enjoy flirting more with someone who is interested in you. So it makes sense to approach people who are likely to see you as at least a possible partner, rather than those likely to dismiss you as unsuitable.

Evolution has favoured males who select young, attractive mates and females who select partners with power, wealth and status. Men therefore naturally tend to seek women who are younger than them and place greater emphasis on physical beauty, while women are more likely to favour older males with higher status and earning potential. Women also tend to prefer men who are taller than them. Analysis of thousands of personal ads – where people are more explicit about their requirements, and more obviously conscious of the requirements of others – shows that these are the qualities most frequently demanded and offered by mate-seekers.

Short, low-status males and older, less attractive females may therefore be a bit more restricted in their choice of potential partners, although there are many exceptions to this rule, and confidence and charm can outweigh apparent disadvantages.



In the How to Flirt section, you will find tips on how to tell immediately, even from across a crowded room, whether someone is likely to return your interest or not.

## **How to flirt**

The first key to successful flirting is not an ability to show off and impress, but the knack of conveying that you like someone. If your 'target' knows that you find him or her interesting and attractive, he or she will be more inclined to like you.

Although this simple fact has been demonstrated in countless studies and experiments, you don't really need scientists to prove it. You already know that when you are told someone fancies you, or hear that someone has praised or admired you, your interest in that person automatically increases – even if it is someone you have never met!

Conveying that you like someone, and judging whether or not the attraction is mutual, clearly involves a combination of verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

When asked about flirting, most people – particularly men – focus on the verbal element: the 'chatting-up', the problems of knowing what to say, finding the right words, etc. In fact, the non-verbal element – body-language, tone of voice, etc. – is much more important, particularly in the initial stages of a flirtation.

When you first meet new people, their initial impression of you will be based 55% on your appearance and body-language, 38% on your style of speaking and only 7% on what you actually say.

Also, their non-verbal signals will tell you much more about their feelings towards you than the words they use. We show attitudes such as liking and disliking not by what we say but by the way we say it and the posture, gestures and expressions that accompany our speech.

The customary polite greeting "pleased to meet you", for example, can convey anything from 'I find you really attractive' to 'I am not the slightest bit interested in you', depending on the tone of voice, facial expression, position and posture of the speaker.



## Non-verbal flirting

When a man and a woman meet for the first time, both are in a difficult, ambiguous and potentially risky situation. Neither person knows what the other's intentions and feelings are. Because stating intentions and feelings verbally involves a high risk of embarrassment or possible rejection, non-verbal behaviour becomes the main channel of communication. Unlike the spoken word, body language can signal invitation, acceptance or refusal without being too obvious, without causing offence or making binding commitments.

Warning: some of the non-verbal flirting techniques outlined in this section are very powerful signals, and should be used with caution. Women should be particularly careful when using signals of interest and attraction. Men already tend to mistake friendliness for flirting; if your signals of interest are too direct and obvious, they will mistake them for sexual availability.

### Eye contact

Your eyes are probably your most important flirting tool. We tend to think of our eyes mainly as a means of receiving information, but they are also extremely high-powered transmitters of vital social signals. How you look at another person, meet his or her gaze and look away can make all the difference between a successful, enjoyable flirtation and an embarrassing or hurtful encounter.

Eye contact – looking directly into the eyes of another person – is such a powerful, emotionally loaded act of communication that we normally restrict it to very brief glances. Prolonged eye contact between two people indicates intense emotion, and is either an act of love or an act of hostility. It is so disturbing that in normal social encounters, we avoid eye contacts of more than one second. Among a crowd of strangers in a public setting, eye contacts will generally last only a fraction of second, and most people will avoid making any eye contact at all.



This is very good news for anyone wishing to initiate a flirtation with an attractive stranger. Even from across a crowded room at a party, you can signal your interest in someone merely by making eye contact and attempting to hold your target's gaze for more than one second (not too much more, though, or you will seem threatening). If your target maintains eye contact with you for more than one second, the chances are that he/she might return your interest. If after this initial contact, your target looks away briefly and then looks back to meet your gaze a second time, you can safely

assume that he/she is interested. If these eye contacts trigger a smile, you can approach your target with some confidence.

If, on the other hand, your target avoids making eye contact with you, or looks away after a fraction of a second and does not look back again, you should probably assume that your interest is not returned. There is still the possibility that your target is just a very shy person – and some females may be understandably wary of signalling any interest in male strangers. The only way to find out is by close observation of your target's behaviour towards others. Does she consistently avoid direct eye-contact with men? Does he seem nervous, anxious or aloof in his interactions with other women? If so, your target's reluctance to meet your gaze may be nothing personal, and it might be worth approaching, but only with considerable caution.



Once you have approached your target, you will need to make eye contact again in order to strike up a conversation. As soon as your eyes meet, you may begin to speak. Once a conversation begins, it is normal for eye contact to be broken as the speaker looks away. In conversations, the person who is speaking looks away more than the person who is listening, and turn-taking is governed by a characteristic pattern of looking, eye contact and looking away.

So, to signal that you have finished speaking and invite a response, you then look back at your target again. To show interest while your target is speaking, you need to look at his/her face about three-quarters of the time, in glances lasting between one and seven seconds. The person speaking will normally look at you for less than half this time, and direct eye contact will be intermittent, rarely lasting more than one second. When your target has finished speaking, and expects a response, he or she will look at you and make brief eye contact again to indicate that it is your turn.



The basic rules for pleasant conversation are: glance at the other person's face more when you are listening, glance away more when you are speaking and make brief eye contact to initiate turn-taking. The key words here are 'glance' and 'brief': avoid prolonged staring either at the other person or away.

The most common mistake people make when flirting is to overdo the eye contact in a premature attempt to increase intimacy. This only makes the other person feel uncomfortable, and may send misleading signals. Some men also blow their chances by carrying on a conversation with a woman's breasts, rather than looking at her face.

### **Interpersonal distance**

The distance you keep from the other person when flirting is important, because it will affect his or her impression of you, and the quality of your interaction. Perhaps even more importantly, paying attention to the other person's use of distance will tell you a great deal about his/her reactions and feelings towards you.

When you first approach an attractive stranger, having established at least an indication of mutual interest through eye contact, try to make eye contact again at about 4ft away, before moving any closer. At 4 ft (about two small steps away), you are on the borderline between what are known as the 'social zone' (4 to 12 ft) and the 'personal

zone' (18in to 4ft).

If you receive a positive response at 4ft, move in to 'arm's length' (about 2ft 6in). If you try to approach much closer than this, particularly if you try to cross the 18in 'personal zone/intimate zone' border, your target may feel uncomfortable. The 'intimate zone' (less than 18in) is reserved for lovers, family and very close friends. If you are close enough to whisper and be heard, you are probably too close for comfort.



These distance rules apply particularly in face-to-face encounters. We will tolerate reduced interpersonal distances when we are side by side with someone. This is because when you are alongside someone, it is easier to use other aspects of body language, such as turning away or avoiding eye contact, to 'limit' your level of involvement with the other person.

You can therefore approach a bit closer than 'arm's length' if you are alongside your target – at the bar counter of a pub, for example – rather than face-to-face. But be careful to avoid 'intrusive' body-language such as prolonged eye contact or touching.

If you have misjudged the appropriate distance, in either a face-to-face or side-by-side encounter, the other person's discomfort may show in his/her body language. Your target may attempt to turn away or avert his/her gaze to avoid eye contact. You may also see 'barrier signals' such as folded or tightly crossed legs, or rubbing the neck with the elbow pointed towards you. If you see any of these signs, back off!

Finally, remember that different people have different reactions to distance. If your target is from a Mediterranean or Latin American country (known as the 'contact cultures'), he or she may be comfortable with closer distances than a British or Northern European person. North Americans fall somewhere between these two extremes. Different personality-types may also react differently to your approach: extroverts and those who generally feel at ease in company will be comfortable with closer distances than introverts and shy or nervous types. Even the same person may vary in tolerance from day to day, according to mood: when we are feeling depressed or irritable, we find close distances more uncomfortable.



## Posture



Most of us are quite good at controlling our faces – maintaining an expression of polite interest, for example, when we are really bored to tears, or even nodding when we really disagree! But we tend to be less conscious of what the rest of our body is doing. We may be smiling and nodding, but unconsciously revealing our disagreement by a tense posture with tightly folded arms. This is known as 'non-verbal leakage': while we're busy controlling our words and faces, our real feelings 'leak out' in our posture.

When flirting, you should therefore watch out for signs of this 'non-verbal leakage' in your partner's posture – and try to send the right signals with your own posture.

Your partner's 'non-verbal leakage' can give you advance warning that your chat-up isn't working. If only his/her head is turned towards you, with the rest of the body oriented in another direction, this is a sign that you do not have your partner's full attention. Even just the feet starting to turn and 'point' away from you can be a sign that his/her attention is directed elsewhere, or that he/she is thinking about moving away. Leaning backwards and supporting the head on one hand are signs of boredom. 'Closed' postures with arms folded and legs tightly crossed indicate disagreement or dislike.

More positive signs to watch out for would be a partner's body oriented towards you, particularly if he/she is also leaning forward, and an 'open' posture. These are signs of attentiveness and interest or liking.

Experiments have also shown that females are more likely to tilt their heads to one side when they are interested in the person they are talking to. Men should beware, however, of automatically assuming that these signs indicate sexual interest. Women should be aware of men's tendency to make such assumptions, and avoid signalling interest too obviously.

Another positive sign is what psychologists call 'postural congruence' or 'postural echo': when your partner unconsciously adopts a posture similar to yours. Mirror-image postural echoes – where one person's left side 'matches' the other person's right side – are the strongest indication of harmony and rapport between the pair. If the position of your partner's body and limbs appear to 'echo' or 'mimic' your own, particularly if his/her posture is a mirror image of yours, the chances are that he/she feels an affinity with you.

When flirting, you can also use postural echo to create a feeling of togetherness and harmony. Experiments have shown that although people are not consciously aware of someone deliberately 'echoing' their postures, they will evaluate a person who does this more favourably. If you 'echo' your partner's postures, he/she will not only feel more at ease in your company, but will perceive you as more like-minded.

This technique obviously has its limits. We would not suggest, for example, that a woman in a mini-skirt should 'echo' the open-legged sitting posture of her male companion. But if he is leaning forward with his left forearm resting on the table, she could create a sense of common identity by 'mirroring' this aspect of his posture – leaning forward with her right forearm on the table.



In addition to these 'generic' signals of interest, there are specifically male and female posture signals which are often seen in flirtatious encounters. These tend to be postures which enhance the masculine or dominant appearance of the male, and the femininity of the female. Males may adopt postures which make them appear taller, larger and more impressive, such as placing hands in pockets with elbows out to enlarge the chest, or leaning one hand at above shoulder height on a wall to appear taller and more imposing. Females either adopt postures which make them look smaller, such as drawing the knees towards the body when seated, or postures which draw attention to physical attributes attractive to males, such as arching the back to display the breasts, or crossing and re-crossing the legs to draw attention to them.



## Gestures



As well as overall body posture, the gestures we use can signal interest, attraction and invitation – or discomfort, dislike and rejection.

When flirting, it is important to be aware of these non-verbal cues, both in 'reading' your partner's body-language and in controlling the messages you are sending with your own gestures.

In conversation, gestures are mainly used to enliven, clarify and 'punctuate' our speech, or to show responsiveness to what the other person is saying. In a flirtatious encounter, the amount of gesticulation, the directions of the gestures and the co-ordination of gestures can indicate the degree of interest and involvement your partner feels towards you.

Different cultures vary widely in the amount of gesticulation that accompanies their speech (Italians say that you can silence an Italian by tying his hands behind his back), and even within a single culture, some people naturally express themselves more through gestures than others. Generally, however, someone who is interested in you will be more lively and animated in conversation, using more gestures when speaking in order to keep your attention, and more responsive gestures to show interest when you are speaking.

Similarly, you can signal interest in your partner, and keep his/her attention focused on you, by enhancing your speech with appropriate gestures: shifting your hands or head slightly at the end of sentences, using downward hand movements to emphasise a point, 'projecting' what you are saying towards your partner by open-palm hand movements and so on. When your partner is speaking, you can show responsiveness by nodding in agreement, throwing up your hands in surprise, bringing them together in a 'silent clap' of appreciation, etc.

Researchers have found that nodding can be used to 'regulate' conversations. If you make single, brief nods while your partner is speaking, these act as simple signs of attentiveness, which will maintain the flow of communication from the speaker. Double nods will change the rate at which the other person speaks, usually speeding up the flow, while triple nods or single, slow nods often interrupt the flow altogether, confusing speakers so much that they stop in their tracks. So, if you want to express interest and keep your partner chatting with you, stick to brief single nods.

You can also watch for gestures which indicate anxiety and nervousness, such as hand-clasping movements and palm-rubbing. As a general rule, anxious gestures are directed towards the anxious person's own body (known as 'proximal' movements), while 'distal' movements, directed away from the body, are a sign of confidence. As well as watching for these signals in your partner, you can control the impression you are making by using more confident, 'distal' gestures.





As with posture, the greatest involvement and harmony is achieved when gestures are synchronised – when the movements of one person are echoed or reflected by the other. You may have noticed that this tends to happen naturally between people who like each other and get on well together. Watch pairs of lovers in a bar or pub, and you will see that they often tend to lift their drinks and take a sip at the same time, and that many of their other body movements and gestures will be similarly synchronised. Psychologists call this 'interactional synchrony' or 'gestural dance', and some of their research findings indicate that the timing of matched gestures may be accurate down to fractions of a second.

Although this synchronisation normally happens without conscious effort, you can use it as a highly effective flirting technique. If you feel the conversation is not flowing easily, or you and partner seem awkward and uncomfortable with each other, try to be more sensitive to the patterns of his/her gestures and body movements, and to reflect these in your own body language.

If your partner spontaneously begins to synchronise his/her body language with yours, this is a sign that he/she feels comfortable with you. Men should not assume that it necessarily indicates sexual interest, however. Women can avoid creating this impression by reducing synchronisation, adopting a more 'closed' posture and avoiding the use of gestures which are specifically associated with flirtatious behaviour. In experiments, female hair-flipping and head-tossing were among the (non-contact) gestures most often regarded as sexually flirtatious, along with repeated leg-crossing and movements designed to draw attention to the breasts.

### **Facial expression**



An ability to 'read' and interpret the facial expressions of your partner will improve your chances of successful flirting, as will awareness of what you are signalling with your own expressions.

Some expressions can be effective even from a distance, as in the 'across a crowded room' encounter with a stranger. The 'eyebrow-flash', for example, which involves raising the eyebrows very briefly – for about one-sixth of a second – is used almost universally as a long-distance greeting signal. When you see someone you know, but are not near enough to speak, the eyebrow-flash shows that you have noticed and recognised them.

We all use this non-verbal "Hello!" in situations where we cannot use the verbal equivalent, either because of distance or social convention. Watch a video of Andrew and Fergie's wedding, for example, and you will see that Fergie performs frequent eyebrow-flashes as she walks down the aisle. Social etiquette does not allow a bride to call out cheery greetings to her friends and relations during the ceremony, but the highly sociable Fergie is clearly unable to refrain from signalling the same greetings with her eyebrows.

If you are desperate to attract the attention of an attractive stranger across a crowded party, you could try an eyebrow-flash. This should make your target think that you must be a friend or acquaintance, even though he or she does not recognise you. When you approach, your target may thus already be wondering who you are. You can, if you are skilful, use this confusion to initiate a lively discussion about where you might have met before. Such conversations inevitably centre on possible shared interests or friends or habits, and invariably involve mutual disclosure of at least some personal information. As you will



learn from the 'Verbal flirting' sections of this Guide, these are essential ingredients of successful flirting. So, assuming your target finds you attractive, an eyebrow-flash with appropriate follow-up could leapfrog you into instant intimacy.

**Two warnings are necessary here:**

1) If your target does not find you attractive, the eyebrow-flash strategy may backfire, as the confusion over whether or not you already know each other will be experienced as unpleasant and annoying, rather than amusing.

2) Do not use the eyebrow-flash in Japan, where it has definite sexual connotations and is therefore never used as a greeting signal.

If your target is attracted to you, this may be more evident in facial expressions than in words. Studies have found that women are generally better than men at reading these expressions, but that both sexes have equal difficulty in seeing through people's expressions when they are controlling their faces to hide their real feelings.

The problem is that although faces do express genuine feelings, any facial expression that occurs naturally can also be produced artificially for a social purpose. Smiles and frowns, to take the most obvious examples, can be spontaneous expressions of happiness or anger, but they can also be manufactured as deliberate signals, such as frowning to indicate doubt or displeasure, smiling to signal approval or agreement, etc. Feelings can also be hidden under a 'social' smile, a 'stiff upper lip' or a blank, 'inscrutable' expression.

Despite this potential for 'deceit', we rely more on facial expressions than on any other aspect of body language. In conversation, we watch our companions' faces rather than their hands or feet, and rely on their facial signals to tell us what effect we are having, and how to interpret what they say. Although people are better at controlling their facial expressions than other aspects of body language, there is still some 'leakage', and the following clues will help you to detect insincerity.



**Let's say your target smiles at you. How do you know whether this smile is spontaneous or manufactured?**

There are four ways of telling the difference.

First, spontaneous smiles produce characteristic wrinkles around the eyes, which will not appear if your target is 'forcing' a smile out of politeness.

Second, 'forced' or 'social' smiles tend to be asymmetrical (stronger on the left side of the face in right-handed people and on the right side of the face in left-handed people).

The third clue to insincerity is in the timing of the smile: unspontaneous smiles tend to occur at socially inappropriate moments in the conversation (e.g. a few seconds after you have made a funny remark, rather than immediately).

Finally, there is a clue in the duration of the smile, as a manufactured smile tends to be held for longer (what is often called a 'fixed' smile) and then to fade in an irregular way.

When observing your target's facial expressions, it is important to remember that although an expressive face – showing amusement, surprise, agreement etc. at the appropriate moments – may indicate that your target returns your interest, people do naturally differ in their degree and style of emotional expression. Women naturally tend to smile more than men, for example, and to show emotions more clearly in their facial expressions.





**You are also likely to interpret expressions differently depending on who is making them.** Experiments have shown that people may read the same expression as 'fear' when they see it on a female face, but as 'anger' when it appears on male face. There are also cultural and even regional differences in the amount of emotion people express with their faces. Oriental people are more likely than Westerners to hide their emotions under a 'blank' expression or a smile, for example, and American researchers have found that in the US, Northerners smile less than people from the South.

If an attractive stranger smiles at you, it could be that he or she finds you attractive, but he or she could also be an outgoing, sociable person from a culture or region in which smiling is commonplace and not particularly meaningful.

These factors must also be taken into account when considering the effect of your own facial expressions. People tend to be put off by levels of expressiveness that are considerably higher or lower than what they are used to, so it could help to try to 'match' the amount of emotion you express with your face to that of your target.

As a general rule, however, your face should be constantly informative during a flirtatious conversation. Unexpressiveness – a blank, unchanging face – will be interpreted as lack of interest when you are listening and an absence of facial emphasis when you are speaking will be disturbing and off-putting. You need to show interest and comprehension when listening, and to promote interest and comprehension when speaking, through facial signals such as eyebrows raised to display surprise, as a question mark or for emphasis; the corners of the mouth turning up in amusement; nodding to indicate agreement; frowning in puzzlement; smiling to show approval, or to indicate that what you are saying should not be taken too seriously, and so on.

Fortunately, most of these facial signals are habitual, and do not have to be consciously manufactured, but some awareness of your facial expressions can help you to monitor their effect and make minor adjustments to put your target more at ease, for example, or hold his or her attention, or increase the level of intimacy.

Finally, remember that your target is unlikely to be scrutinising you for tiny signs of insincerity, so a 'social' smile will be infinitely more attractive than no smile at all.



## ***How to Read Male Flirting Signals***



Not everything a guy does is a sign that he is flirting. This can make it difficult especially when a man frequently exhibits standard flirting signals. So, how can you tell if he is flirting or not? Start by observing his behavior. Watch how he interacts with other women and even other men. For example, do his eyes light up when he looks at you or when he looks at every other lady in the room? If he is interested in you, he will keep flirting that day, and if he is around you often, in the days to come. So stop and observe just a little before deciding whether to take action.

Men's flirting technique can be relatively limited. Fine: after all, it's the girl who makes the first move, though the guy might not know it. With a fair degree of accuracy, you can guess a guy is flirting from the way he's clearly looking for

someone's attention. The gestures he speaks to his friends with expand. He exaggerates his body language – to a greater or lesser extent – and his voice might sound as if he's projecting to more than his immediate group of friends.

Men's flirting body language extends, during this initial stage, to his detaching himself from his company. He'll pull back from them slightly, making sure that you have a good view. How do you know it's you? Well, has he looked yet? Briefly? Occasionally? Surreptitiously? If not, he's about to.



Once he has your attention – and through the point where you actually meet and chat – his flirting signals do become a little more subtle. Check for the following. Men: do this!

## Body Language Signals

Many men will use one or more of these body language techniques. Sometimes he may not even be immediately aware of what he is doing, but you will know if you're observant. Remember that non-verbal communication is every bit as important as verbal communication, especially if the guy is a little bit shy or at a loss for words when in your presence.

### LoveToKnow Dating Tips

#### Don't Forget to Flirt Back

Being flirted with is lots of fun. If you are interested in him, don't forget to flirt back. He won't know you're interested unless you send him some signals of your own.

## He Looks at You



Since men are visual by nature, the number one sign he is flirting is when he looks at you. A single glance is not enough when he's attracted. If he likes what he sees, his glance will linger longer than normal, and he will quickly return to looking at you when he finally does look away. Also be watching for the triangular look, where he starts with your eyes, moves down to your lips and chin, and then inspects the rest of you before returning his gaze back to your eyes.

### Lifts his Eyebrows

When he lifts his eyebrows, this is a signal that he is interested in what you have to say. If he is still across the room and you are exchanging glances, then his raising eyebrows are a sign that he would like to talk with you. Raise your eyebrows back at him and he may walk over to meet you.

### His Face Widens and Lips Part

In addition to lifting his eyebrows, he may also widen his face and slightly part his lips. He widens his face by flaring his nostrils ever so slightly. The result of these movements is to make his face appear friendlier and open to meeting and talking.

### Shifts his Stance

If he is standing and facing you, watch for a shift in his stance. The classic male pose is to directly face you with

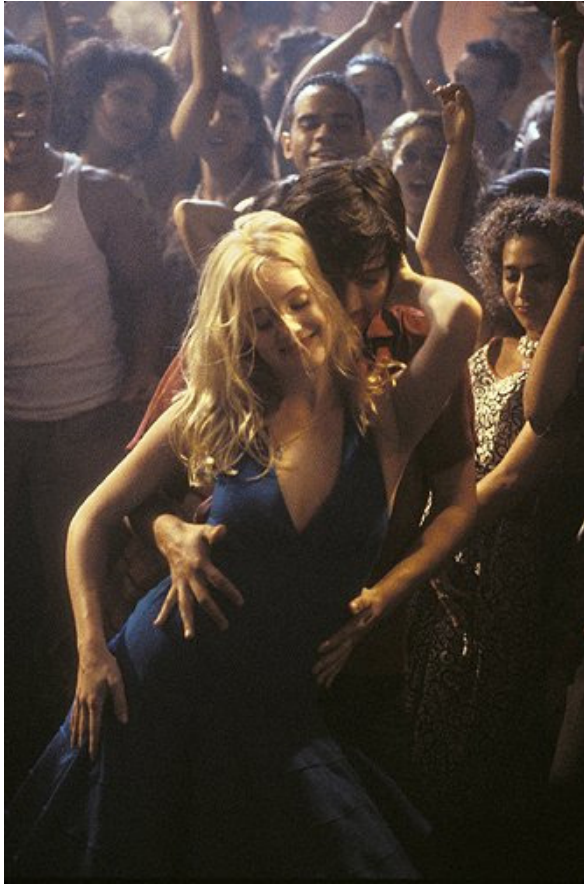
his feet pointed right at you. This signals that all of his attention is on you. It also makes him look tall and strong. Watch his hands to see if they move towards his hips or belt. This further makes him look even stronger and more engaged.

His face and body language 'open'. He's putting himself on display and looking receptive. His eyebrows raise, the eyes widen, the lips part slightly – even the nostrils flare. What this means is that he's taking away the blocks he might use in his more lad-oriented life and inviting you to see and engage with the sensually sensitive real him.

He'll stand tall – and look manly. He'll square off and pull himself up to his full height, displaying his prowess – and he'll make sure you have time to admire him.

He'll draw your eyes towards his groin. It's basic but that's what he's up to. He'll sit with his legs apart. If standing, he'll hook his thumbs over his belt, or leave them outside his pockets, this both opening his posture and pointing to the meat of the matter, inviting you to contemplate what he's got there.

## **Preening**



When a man is interested in a woman, he will want to look his best to increase his chances of impressing her.

Watch and see if he tries to clean up a little right in front of you, as this is part of his male flirting signals.

### **Touches his Shirt, Pants and Tie**

Watch and see if he tries to perform an impromptu ironing session on his clothes. Look for his hands to run along his shirt and jeans in an attempt to smooth out any wrinkles. If he is wearing a tie or a shirt with a collar, he will likely adjust those as well.

### **Touches his Face or Hair**

A classic female flirting technique is when she touches her hair but men do it too. He might also touch his face, as a nervous gesture and to make sure it's free of any unwanted items.

### **Pulls up his Socks**

If you see him pull up his socks, it could mean he is very interested in you. What do socks have to do with attraction? It means he is paying attention to every last detail regarding his appearance.

## **Other Male Flirting Techniques**

His flirting isn't reserved to body language and fixing his appearance.

### **Moves into Your Space**

Nothing gets your attention like someone moving in to stand or sit close to you. When he comes close, know that he has already established in his own mind that he is attracted. He now wants to get to know you more.

### **Touches You**

Part of the reason for his moving in close is because he wants to touch you. At this point you may not notice everything he is doing because of his proximity. Watch for him making excuses to touch you on your shoulder, your hair, your arm or your hands.

## ***How to Read Female Flirting Signals***

It's a girl's non-verbal flirting signals that give a guy the green light to approach her. Guys, if you're not sure, look for several of these signs of flirting. One alone means little or nothing – her lips felt dry; she has an itch or a stiff neck – but when the signs come together, she's up for it!

She'll give good face. From a distance, you might get a direct look, prolonged eye contact, smiling – and it couldn't be a great deal clearer than that. If she's a little more shy, there'll be short, repeated glances. Get on over!

She follows the flirting triangle. Her eyes move between your eyes and your mouth – and linger increasingly on your mouth. Yes, she's thinking of kissing you. There's also the corollary effect that this will make you want to kiss her more.



She'll stroke and show her intimate and erogenous zones. Stroking her neck is autoerotic in itself – but does have the added advantage of lifting her breasts and exposing (erotic and pheromone-rich) armpits. Sitting, a display of her inner thigh gives a cheeky invitation to think about going higher. She'll stroke her thigh – and face, and arms... She'll turn her wrists towards you – displaying and thinking about her most highly sensitised areas.

She'll check your body. It began with your face. Now, if she's really interested, you'll see her gaze drifting lower. You've past the first test and now she wants to see if you're really hot.

She'll get closer – and she'll draw you in closer too. She'll whisper, so that you're obliged to draw close, and move her face forwards into your intimate space.

She'll push objects towards you. Again, she's entering into your space. If she leaves her hand there, touch it.

She'll preen her clothes and hair and lick her lips – looking her best for you.

## Touch

Touching is a powerful, subtle and complex form of communication. In social situations, the language of touch can be used to convey a surprising variety of messages. Different touches can be used to express agreement, affection, affiliation or attraction; to offer support; to emphasise a point; to call for attention or participation; to guide and direct; to greet; to congratulate; to establish or reinforce power-relations and to negotiate levels of intimacy.



Even the most fleeting touch can have a dramatic influence on our perceptions and relationships. Experiments have shown that even a light, brief touch on the arm during a brief social encounter between strangers has both immediate and lasting positive effects. Polite requests for help or directions, for example, produced much more positive results when accompanied by a light touch on the arm.

When flirting, it is therefore important to remember that the language of touch, if used correctly, can help to advance the relationship, but that inappropriate use of this powerful tool could ruin your chances forever.

Although there are considerable differences between cultures in the levels of touching that are socially acceptable, and different personalities welcome different levels of touching, we can provide a few basic rules-of-thumb for first encounters with strangers of the opposite sex.

The first rule, for both sexes, is: touch, but be careful. Women are much less comfortable about being touched by an opposite-sex stranger than men, so men should take care to avoid any touches which may seem threatening or over-familiar. Men are inclined to interpret women's friendly gestures as sexual invitations, so women should be equally careful to avoid giving misleading signals with over-familiar touches.

This does not mean 'don't touch', as appropriate touching will have positive benefits, but touching should initially be restricted to universally acceptable areas and levels. As a general rule, the arm is the safest place to touch an opposite-sex stranger. (Back pats are equally non-sexual, but are often perceived as patronising or overbearing.) A brief, light



touch on the arm, to draw attention, express support or emphasise a point, is likely to be acceptable and to enhance your companion's positive feelings towards you.

If even this most innocuous of touches produces a negative reaction – such as pulling the arm away, increasing distance, frowning, turning away or other expressions of displeasure or anxiety – you might as well give up now. Unless your companion is exceptionally shy and reserved, negative reactions to a simple arm-touch probably indicate dislike or distrust.



If your companion finds you likeable or attractive, a brief arm-touch should prompt some reciprocal increase in intimacy. This may not be as obvious as a return of your arm-touch, but watch for other positive body-language signals, such as increased eye-contact, moving closer to you, more open posture or postural echo, more smiling, etc. Your arm-touch may even prompt an increase in verbal intimacy, so listen for any disclosure of personal information, or more personal questions.

If you see or hear signs of a positive reaction to your arm-touch, you can, after a reasonable interval, try another arm-touch, this time slightly less fleeting. If this results in a further escalation of verbal or non-verbal intimacy from your companion, you might consider moving to the next stage: a hand-touch.

Remember that a hand-touch, unless it is the conventional handshake of greeting or parting, is much more personal than an arm-touch. By touching your companion's hand, you are opening negotiations towards a higher degree of intimacy, so keep it light and brief: a question, not an order.

A negative reaction to your hand-touch, such as the non-verbal signals of displeasure or anxiety mentioned above, does not necessarily mean that your companion dislikes you, but it is a clear indication that your attempt to advance to the next level of intimacy is either premature or unwelcome. A very positive reaction, involving a significant increase in verbal or non-verbal intimacy, can be taken as permission to try another hand-touch at an appropriate moment.

Highly positive reactions to a second hand-touch – such as a definite and unambiguous attempt to move closer to you, reciprocal arm- and hand-touching, along with significantly more personal questions, more disclosure of personal information and more expression of emotion – can be taken as permission to proceed, with caution, to a higher level of intimacy. The next stages might involve a hand-squeeze or hand-hold, repeated twice before moving on to an arm over the shoulders, or perhaps a brief knee-touch. (Males should note, however, that positive reactions to any of these touches can not be taken as permission to grope.)

You will have noticed that we advise performing each touch two times before progressing to the next level. This is because repeating the same touch, perhaps with a slightly longer duration, allows you to check that reactions are still positive, that you were not mistaken in your judgement that the touch was acceptable. The repetition also tells your companion that the first touch was not accidental or unconscious, that you are consciously negotiating for an increase in intimacy. Repeating the same touch before moving to the next level is a non-verbal way of saying "Are you sure?".

## **Vocal signals**



You may be surprised to see this heading in the 'Non-verbal flirting' section, but 'verbal' means 'words' and vocal signals such as tone of voice, pitch, volume, speed of speech, etc. are like body-language in that they are not about what you say, the words you use, but about how you say it.

We noted at the beginning of this 'non-verbal' section that people's first impressions of you are based 55% on your appearance and body language, 38% on your style of speaking and only 7% on what you actually say. In other words, body-language may be your most important 'flirting tool', but vocal signals come a very close second. The more you think about that 38%, the more concerned you will be to ensure that your vocal signals make the best possible impression. An ability to 'read' the vocal signals of the person you are flirting with will also help you to find out how he or she really feels about you.

Attraction and interest, for example, are communicated much more by the tone of voice than by what is actually said. Depending on the tone, volume, speed and pitch, even a simple phrase such as "Good evening" can convey anything from "Wow, you're gorgeous" to "I find you totally uninteresting and I'm looking for an excuse to get away from you as quickly as possible".

If your target gives you a deep-toned, low pitched, slow, drawn-out "Good evening", with a slight rising intonation at the end, as though asking a question, this is probably an indication of attraction or at least interest. If you get a short, high-pitched, clipped "Good evening", or a monotone, expressionless version, your target is probably not interested in you.

Once you are in conversation, remember that the intonation of even a single word can communicate an immense variety of emotions and meanings. As an experiment, try practising variations in your intonation of the one-word response "Yeah", and you will find that you can communicate anything from enthusiastic agreement to grudging acceptance to varying degrees of scepticism to total disbelief.

If you speak in a monotone, with little variation in pitch, pace or tone of voice, you will be perceived as boring and dull, even if what you are saying is truly fascinating or exceptionally amusing. Loud volume, a booming tone and too much variation in pitch will make you seem overbearing. Speak too quietly or too slowly and you will seem submissive or even depressed. Aim for moderation in volume and tone, with enough variation in pitch and pace to hold your companion's interest.

Also remember that a rising or falling intonation, especially when accompanied by a drop in volume, is a 'turn-yielding cue', whereby speakers signal that they have finished what they are saying and are ready to listen to the other person. When you hear these vocal signals, your companion is probably indicating that it is your turn to speak. When your companion hears these signals, he or she may well assume that you are 'yielding' the floor. If you frequently end sentences on a rising or falling intonation, with a drop in volume, and then carry on without allowing your companion to speak, he or she will become frustrated. Taking your turn when your companion has not given any vocal 'turn-yielding cues', even if he or she has finished a sentence, will be perceived as interruption, and is equally irritating.



## Verbal flirting

Although your target's initial impressions of you will depend more on your appearance, body language and voice than on what you actually say, successful flirting also requires good conversation skills.

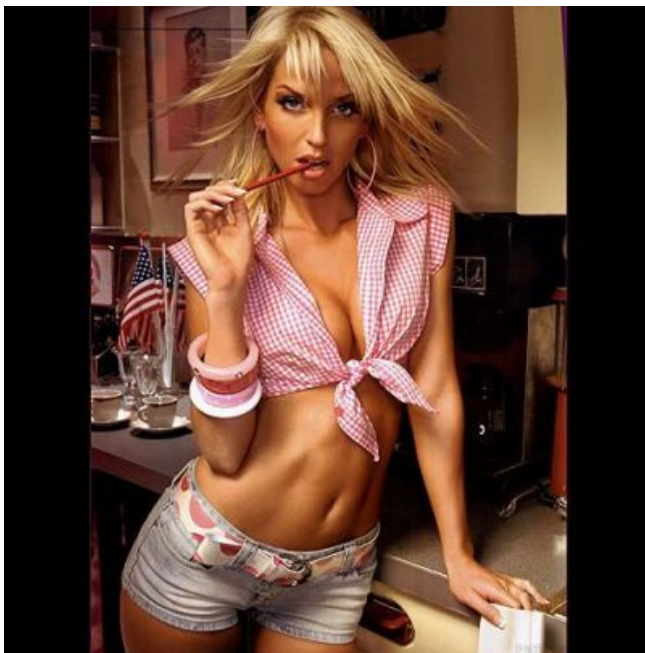
The 'art' of verbal flirting is really just a matter of knowing the rules of conversation, the unwritten laws of etiquette governing talking and listening. The best and most enjoyable conversations may seem entirely spontaneous, but the people involved are still obeying rules. The difference is that they are following the rules automatically, without consciously trying, just as skilled, experienced drivers do not have to think about changing gears. But understanding how the rules of conversation work – like learning how and when to change gears – will help you to converse more fluently, and flirt more successfully.

Studies have shown that women tend to be more skilled at informal social conversation than men, both because they are naturally more socially sensitive, and because they have better verbal/communication skills. (Men make up for this with superior visual-spatial abilities, but these are not much help in verbal flirting.) Men can, of course, easily learn to be as skilled in the art of conversation as women – it is only a matter of following a few simple rules – but some do not take the trouble to learn, or may be unaware of their deficiencies in this area. Those males who do take the trouble to improve their conversation skills (perhaps by reading this Guide) have a definite advantage in the flirting stakes.





## Opening lines



When the subject of flirting comes up, most people seem to be obsessed with the issue of 'opening lines' or 'chat-up lines'. Men talk about lines that work and lines that have failed; women laugh about men's use of hackneyed or awkward opening lines, and all of us, whether we admit it or not, would like to find the perfect, original, creative way to strike up a conversation with someone we find attractive.

The answer, perhaps surprisingly, is that your opening line is really not very important, and all this striving for originality and wit is a wasted effort. The fact is that conversational 'openers' are rarely original, witty or elegant, and no-one expects them to be so. The best 'openers' are, quite simply, those which can easily be recognised as 'openers' – as attempts to start a conversation.

The traditional British comment on the weather ("Nice day, isn't it?" or "Doesn't feel much like summer, eh?", etc.) will do just fine, as everyone knows that it is a conversation-starter. The fact that these comments are phrased as questions, or with a rising 'interrogative' intonation, does not mean that the speaker is unsure about the quality of the weather and requires

confirmation: it means that the speaker is inviting a response in order to start a conversation.

In Britain, it is universally understood that such weather-comments have nothing to do with the weather, and they are universally accepted as conversation-starters. Saying "Lovely day, isn't it?" (or a rainy-day equivalent) is the British way of saying "I'd like to talk to you; will you talk to me?"

A friendly response, including positive body language, means "Yes, I'll talk to you"; a monosyllabic response (accompanied by body-language signalling lack of interest) means "No, I don't want to talk to you", and no verbal response at all, with body language signalling annoyance or dislike, means "Shut up and go away".

If you are indoors – say at a party or in a bar – and nowhere near a window, some equally innocuous general comment on your surroundings ("Bit crowded, isn't it?", "Not very lively here tonight, eh?") or on the food, drink, music, etc., will serve much the same purpose as the conventional weather-comment. The words are really quite unimportant, and there is no point in striving to be witty or amusing: just make a vague, impersonal comment,

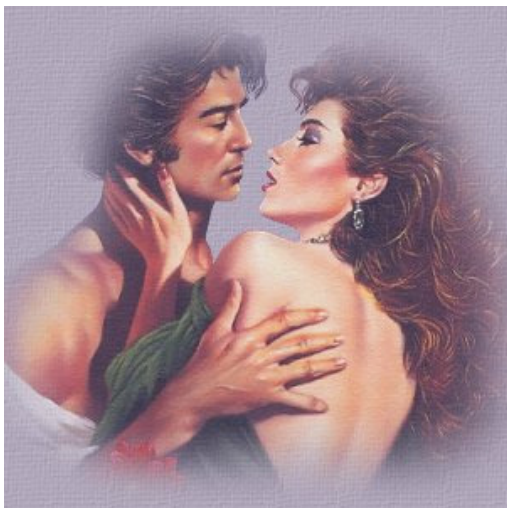
either phrased as a question or with a rising intonation as though you were asking a question.

This formula – the impersonal interrogative comment – has evolved as the standard method of initiating conversation with strangers because it is extremely effective. The non-personal nature of the comment makes it unthreatening and non-intrusive; the interrogative (questioning) tone or 'isn't it?' ending invites a response, but is not as demanding as a direct or open question.

There is a big difference between an interrogative comment such as "Terrible weather, eh?" and a direct, open question such as "What do you think of this weather?". The direct question demands and requires a reply, the interrogative comment allows the other person to respond minimally, or not respond at all, if he or she does not wish to talk to you.

In some social contexts – such as those involving sports, hobbies, learning, business or other specific activities – the assumption of shared interests makes initiating conversation much easier, as your opening line can refer

to some aspect of the activity in question. In some such contexts, there may even be a ritual procedure to follow for initiating conversation with a stranger. At the races, for example, anyone can ask anyone "What's your tip for the next?"





or "What do you fancy in the 3.30?", a ritual opening which effectively eliminates all the usual awkwardness of approaching a stranger.

Unless the context you are in provides such a convenient ritual, use the IIC (Impersonal Interrogative Comment) formula. This formula can be adapted to almost any situation or occasion. **Just make a general, impersonal comment on some aspect of the event, activity, circumstances or surroundings, with a rising intonation or 'isn't it?' type of ending.** Your target will recognise this as a conversation-starter, and his or her response will tell you immediately whether or not it is welcomed.

There are of course degrees of positive and negative response to an IIC. The elements you need to listen for are length, personalising and questioning. As a general rule, the longer the response, the better. If your target responds to your comment with a reply of the same length or longer, this is a good sign. A personalised response, i.e. one including the word 'I' (as in, for example, "Yes, I love this weather") is even more positive. A personalised response ending in a question or interrogative (rising) intonation (as in "I thought it was supposed to clear up by this afternoon?") is even better, and a personalised response involving a personalised question, i.e. a response including the words 'I' and 'you', is the most positive of all.



So, if you say "Nice day, isn't it?" and your target replies "Yes, I was getting so tired of all that rain, weren't you?", you are definitely in with a chance. Note that there is nothing original, witty or clever about the above exchange. You may even be inclined to dismiss it as polite, boring and insignificant. In fact, a great deal of vital social information has been exchanged. The opener has been recognised as a friendly invitation to a conversation, the invitation has been accepted, the target has revealed something about him/herself, expressed interest in you, and even suggested that you might have something in common!

The biggest mistake most people make with opening lines is to try to start a flirtation, rather than simply trying to start a conversation. If you think about your opening line as initiating a conversation, rather than starting a flirtation, use the IIC formula and pay close attention to the verbal and non-verbal response, you cannot go wrong. Even if your target does not find you attractive and declines your invitation to talk, you will avoid causing offence and you will avoid the humiliation of a direct rejection.

## Turn-taking

Once you have initiated a conversation with your chosen target, your success in making a favourable impression will depend as much on your social skills as on what you say.

We have probably all met at least one person who is highly articulate, witty and amusing, but who loses friends and alienates people by hogging the conversation, not allowing others to get a word in. You may also have come across the equally irritating strong, silent type who makes you do all the 'work' in the conversation – who never asks a question, never expresses interest and makes no effort to keep the conversation flowing.

What you have to say may be fascinating, and you may express it with great eloquence, but if you have not grasped the basic social skills involved in conversational turn-taking, you will be perceived as arrogant and unpleasant, and neither your target nor anyone else will enjoy your company.

The basic rule on how much to talk is very simple: try to make your contribution to the conversation roughly equal to that of your partner. **The essence of a good conversation, and a successful flirtation, is reciprocity: give-and-take, sharing, exchange, with both parties contributing equally as talkers and as listeners.**



Achieving this reciprocity requires an understanding of the etiquette of turn-taking, knowing when to take your turn, as well as when and how to 'yield the floor' to your partner. So, how do you know when it is your turn to speak? Pauses are not necessarily an infallible guide – one study found that the length of the average pause during speech was 0.807 seconds, while the average pause between speakers was shorter, only 0.764 seconds. In other words, people clearly used signals other than pauses to indicate that they had finished speaking.

In previous sections of the Guide, we have described in detail the various non-verbal signals people use to show that they have finished what they are saying, and that it is your turn to speak. These include eye-contact signals (remember that people look away more when they are speaking, so when they look back at you, this often indicates that it is your turn) and vocal signals such as rising or falling intonation, with a drop in volume. This may be accompanied by verbal 'turn-yielding' signals, such as the completion of a clause or 'tailing off' into meaningless expressions such as "you know".

As a general rule, the more of these turn-yielding cues occur simultaneously, the more likely it is that your partner has finished and expects you to speak. Watching and listening for these clues will help you to avoid interrupting, and also to avoid awkward gaps and lengthy pauses in the conversation.

## Talking

This Guide clearly cannot tell you exactly what to say, what words to use, in a flirtatious conversation, but it is possible to provide some general guidelines on what you talk about, and how you express yourself, particularly in terms of mistakes and pitfalls to avoid.

Negativity, for example, is real turn-off. If you talk too much about the bad side of things, and constantly complain about the world or your own problems, your partner will soon get bored and fed up. Other characteristics that research has identified as particularly boring or off-putting include self-preoccupation (talking too much about yourself and showing too little interest in others), banality (only talking about superficial things, repeating hackneyed jokes and stories), tediousness (talking too slowly, pausing too long, taking too long to make a point), passivity (failing to take full part in the conversation or express opinions), lack of enthusiasm (talking in a monotone, not making eye-contact, expressing too little emotion), over-seriousness (using a serious tone of voice and expression, even when your partner is trying to be light-hearted or humorous) and over-excitement (easily sidetracked, engaging in too much meaningless chatter, too much slang).

Compliments, on the other hand, are almost universally welcomed, and do not have to be witty or original. In an analysis of 600 verbatim compliments, linguists found that they tend to follow a tried-and-tested formula, with the word "nice" occurring in nearly 25% of the compliments studied, and the word "you" in almost 75%. In other words, you should not be afraid of paying simple, unflowery compliments such as "That's a nice jacket" or "That colour really suits you", as they can be very effective.

Clearly, excessive use of compliments will make you seem ingratiating, and your partner may become bored with too much suffocating niceness, but of all the ways you can bore someone, studies have shown that this is the least offensive.



Males should, however, avoid paying women embarrassing or potentially offensive compliments. This is not a matter of 'political correctness', but of basic social skills. Some men need to learn that it is entirely possible to convey to a female friend or acquaintance that you find her physically attractive, without being crass or intrusive.

A simple, admiring comment such as "You look lovely (or pretty, or stunning)" is enough. Anything more explicit will only cause embarrassment or offence. The body-language must be right as well: address the compliment to her face, not to her chest, and without leering or what the Americans call 'elevator eyes' (eyes travelling up and down the body).

Timing is equally important: there are times, places and situations where any comment on a woman's appearance, however innocent, would be inappropriate and potentially





offensive. It is not possible to list all these situations here, but as a rule-of-thumb, only comment on a woman's appearance a) if you know her well enough (this kind of compliment should not be used as an opening line, but only at a much later stage in flirtatious conversation) and b) at times, places and situations where appearance is relevant – i.e. where it would be acceptable to comment on a man's appearance. If the situation is not one in which you would compliment a male acquaintance on his flattering new jacket or haircut, do not comment on a female's appearance either.

(Males please note: 80% of women think that they are too fat. In one American survey, women were asked what were the three words they would most like to hear from a male partner. The most common answer was not, as expected, "I love you", but "You've lost weight". While you should not make any comment on a woman's figure unless you know her well, this compliment might please a girlfriend or close female friend.)

## Listening



Good listeners have distinct advantages in the flirting stakes, but being a good listener is not just about shutting up and letting the other person talk (although this certainly helps). Good listening is essentially about giving good 'feedback', which involves giving both verbal and non-verbal signals to show that you are a) paying attention, and b) interested.

Effective non-verbal feedback signals include nodding, smiling, responsive facial expressions and leaning forwards, accompanied by general positive body language such as 'open' posture and posture/gesture echo. Good verbal feedback signals include the use of expressions such as "mm-hmm", "yeah", "mmm", "ah" to show interest or agreement and to encourage the other person to continue.

Research has shown that these basic feedback signals are highly effective in winning friends and influencing people. They can even result in concrete, tangible rewards: studies have found, for example, that candidates who give this sort of feedback during job interviews are more likely to be successful than those who do not. Even just a few nods can significantly improve your chances, both in interviews and in flirtatious conversation.

Another effective good-listener technique is 'paraphrasing'. To show that you are paying attention and interested, and to encourage your

partner to tell you more, it can help if you occasionally sum up what your partner has said, as in "...so you were stranded at the station with no money! How did you get home?" This paraphrasing will be particularly helpful if your partner seems a bit shy, insecure or anxious, as it will make him or her feel more confident.



You may have noticed that the question at the end of the 'paraphrasing' example was an 'open' question, rather than a 'closed' question requiring only a yes or no response. If you want to encourage your partner to talk, try to ask more open questions, such as "What kind of food do you like?" than closed questions such as "Do you like Chinese food?"

If you are not sure about the difference, remember that open questions begin with one of the following words: Who, What, When, Where, How, Why. Journalists and personnel managers are taught to ask questions beginning with these words in interviews, to encourage job candidates and sources to give detailed replies, but they are equally effective in informal social conversation – particularly in flirting!



## Reciprocal disclosure

One of the most important aspects of verbal flirting is what psychologists call 'reciprocal disclosure' – the exchange of personal information. In fact, unless partners disclose at least some personal details, the conversation can hardly be called a flirtation.

When you first meet, these details do not have to be particularly intimate: disclosure of almost any personal information, even something as innocent as the fact that one likes warm weather or Italian food, is a move towards intimacy.

If your partner discloses some such detail, you should reciprocate as soon as possible by revealing some similar information about yourself, perhaps 'raising the ante' a little by making your disclosure slightly more personal. If your partner likes you, he or she will probably try to 'match' your disclosure with one of similar value. Reciprocal disclosure of this kind is a much more subtle and less threatening route to intimacy than asking direct personal questions.

The key to successful flirtation is to escalate the level of intimacy gradually, always maintaining a balance between your disclosures and those of your partner. Avoid getting too far ahead by revealing too much, or lagging behind by revealing too little.

Women should be aware that men tend to interpret disclosure of personal information as a sign of sexual availability, and be particularly careful about how much they reveal.

## Humour

Humour is a powerful flirting tool. It is almost impossible to flirt successfully or enjoyably without it, and yet it can easily backfire if abused or misused.

On the positive side, studies have shown that people who use humour in social encounters are perceived as more likeable, and that both trust and attraction increase when a light-hearted approach is used. Judicious use of humour can reduce anxiety and establish a relaxed mood which helps a relationship to develop more rapidly. A slightly risqué joke can help to escalate the level of intimacy in a flirtatious conversation.

On the negative side, inappropriate use of humour can kill a promising flirtation stone dead in a matter of seconds. Making a risqué joke or comment too early, for example, before a reasonable degree of intimacy has been established, is the verbal equivalent of a bum-pinch. Men are generally more likely to make this kind of fatal mistake than women. Women, however, need to be even more cautious in their use of sexual humour, as men will be inclined to interpret this as a sign of sexual availability.

While it is clearly important to avoid causing offence or giving misleading signals, humour is an essential element of flirtation. Flirting is by definition a light-hearted, playful form of interaction. A flirtatious encounter may eventually lead to a 'serious', long-term relationship, but too much seriousness in the early stages is off-putting. Even in the longer term, a capacity for light-hearted playfulness is important. It is no accident that so many single people seeking partners through the personal ads include 'gsoh' (good sense of humour) in their requirements.

Humour can clearly help to reduce tension and awkwardness in the early stages of a flirtatious encounter. In the section on opening lines, we advised the use of phrases which are universally recognised as 'conversation-starters', such as



comments on the weather. A touch of humour can make these openers even more effective. There is no need for elaborate attempts at wit: a simple twist such as "Lovely day, isn't it?" during a torrential downpour will raise a smile if your target finds you attractive. (If your target does not find you attractive, more elaborate efforts will be no more effective.)

Once some degree of mutual attraction has been established, the use of humour in flirtatious conversations tends to come naturally, as both parties are motivated to keep their target amused and interested. Our natural instinct is to try to make the other person smile. We need constant reassurance that we are liked and appreciated by the object of our attraction, and smiles and laughter provide that reassurance.

One particular form of humour, playful teasing, is particularly common in flirtatious encounters. This is because playful teasing allows partners to increase the 'personal' content of the exchange, while keeping the tone light-hearted and non-serious, thus escalating the level of disclosure and intimacy in a non-threatening manner. Men respond particularly well to this form of humour, as it closely resembles the 'mock-arguments' and good-humoured exchanges of insults which are their normal means of expressing friendship among themselves.



many exceptions, of course: we've all met heavy-going men and raucous women, but most studies show that women are generally more cautious in their use of humour, while men are more inclined to avoid heart-to-heart seriousness.

If you feel you may sometimes be guilty of either excessive or inadequate use of humour, watch your companion carefully for signs of boredom or embarrassment – such as feet or body turning away from you, forced smiles, reduced eye-contact, reduced verbal attention-signals, fidgeting, defensive arm-crossing, etc. If you are overdoing the humour, these would be your cues to tone it down a bit. If you are being too serious, lighten up!

## Parting



Your approach to leave-taking after a flirtatious conversation is of critical importance, as it will determine your future relationship with your companion.

Many flirtatious encounters are of naturally short duration – where it is understood that there are no serious intentions, merely an ego-boosting acknowledgement of mutual attraction. These light-hearted 'brief encounters' are part of normal social interaction, and only the pathetic or desperate would imagine that every passing exchange of flirtatious banter is a prelude to matrimony.

Flirting would not, however, be such a universal feature of human interaction if it did not occasionally serve some more long-term purpose – such as sex, reproduction, the survival of the species, etc. While there is no harm in practising our flirting skills just for the fun of it, there will be some occasions when we wish to pursue the relationship, and a cheery, unconcerned "Bye, then" or "Nice meeting you" will not do. This is when parting words and gestures take on greater significance.





Every salesperson knows that there is little point in establishing a great rapport with potential customers, attracting their interest, gaining their trust and so on, if you fail to 'close' – 'closing' being sales-speak for actually making the sale, securing the contract, getting the customer to hand over money or sign on the dotted line. Sales staff are specifically trained in 'closing techniques' to help them achieve this all-important goal.

In the same way, if you are genuinely attracted to your flirting partner, and want to see him or her again, none of the flirting skills in this Guide will be much use unless you can 'close' effectively. In this case, your goal in 'closing' is to secure not a contract or a sale, but the chance to meet again.

At the risk of rejection, this is the moment when you must be explicit about your wishes. Subtle hints and positive body-language will help you to get to this point, and careful observation of your partner's reactions will tell you whether your 'closing' is likely to be successful, but these techniques cannot, by themselves, get you a phone number or a date! You have to ask. And the most

effective strategy is simple honesty. You don't have to declare undying love, just ask: "Would you like to meet for a drink sometime next week?" (or some equivalent, the exact words are unimportant, but it must be a clear request). If making a date on the spot would be awkward or inappropriate, say something like: "Perhaps we could meet again sometime – could I have your phone number?"

Some American 'dating manuals' recommend that you precede this request with a statement such as "I've really enjoyed talking with you and I'd like to see you again". You are welcome to do this if you wish, but it would seem to be already implicit in the request for a date or phone number, and therefore somewhat superfluous.

Dating manuals and articles in glossy women's magazines also constantly insist that it is perfectly acceptable nowadays for women to take the initiative in asking men out. In fact, they never fail to exclaim, men love it when women take the initiative. This is quite true, and if you read the more scientific research on the subject, you will find out why. The studies and experiments show that men perceive women who take the initiative in asking a man out as more sexually available. To put it more bluntly, if a woman asks them out, they think they have a better chance of 'scoring'. Naturally, they are delighted.

If you are female, and wish to avoid giving this impression, there is a simple solution. Instead of asking for his phone number, offer your own. Say something like: "Maybe we could have a drink sometime? – here's my number". This makes it perfectly clear that you are interested, but still requires the man to take the initiative in asking for a date.



You are of course free to dismiss this suggestion as hopelessly old-fashioned, sexist, pandering to double-standards, etc. It is not the place of this Guide to make moral judgements about flirting, merely to provide information on the latest scientific findings. Flirting has been part of human behaviour for thousands of years, and whether we approve or not, the latest findings show that not much has changed. Males have always tended towards an over-optimistic interpretation of female signals, and females have always adjusted their signals to encourage only selected males.

Despite the disapproval of 17th-century Puritans, Victorian moralists and their modern equivalents in both the 'moral majority' and 'political correctness' camps, these basic flirting instincts persist, and the human species survives.



## **Anyone can learn to flirt, or brush up on their skills of seduction.**

Leigh van den Berg guides us through the ABCs of flirting.



wears on.'

### **Up close and personal**

If you, the 'flirter', happen to know your 'flirtee' (or they come over after you've given them a successful look) there are many ways to let them know you're keen, as well as to tell whether they are interested in you.

Simply practice or look out for the following subtle invitations and subconscious come-ons and you're bound to get or give the signal.

When it comes to the fine art of flirting, a little bit of self-confidence, a friendly smile and these simple tips and tricks will transform even the most dateless disaster into a red-hot Casanova faster than you can say 'hey baby, what's your sign?' (And you will also learn that saying something like that is a very bad thing.)

### **Flirting from afar**

You will be amazed what a single, well-aimed look can achieve when it comes to scoring with the opposite sex. Making eye contact is the first and easiest thing you could ever do to show someone that they have got your attention.

First, lock down on your target, be it Craig from accounts or the stunner at the end of the bar, by shooting them a coy, fleeting glance. When your eyes meet, hold their gaze for one sweet second before looking down or away. This move can be repeated as often as you feel is necessary (bearing in mind that there is a fine line between a 'flirty flash' and a 'staring stalker') to give your chosen hottie the OK to approach you. However, if they remain put, it is best to just write them off as taken, very shy or simply not interested.

Mandy, a self-confessed serial flirter, suggests hunting in packs.

'I like to walk through a crowd of "potentials" while my friends sit back and watch,' she says. 'Later they will tell me which men gave me the eye or checked me out, so I'll know exactly which guys to flirt with as the night

## DO

- Learn to read body language. Pointing your feet or knees towards your subject tells them that they have your full attention, while open, upward-facing palms say 'I'm listening'. Mimicking their movements or laughing in unison makes the other person feel that the two of you are more alike.
- Use friendly touch. Lightly touching their forearm or elbow sends a subtle but distinct message.
- Preen. Licking your lips, flicking your hair and innocently stroking your face are signs of self-consciousness that make the other person aware of the effect they are having on you. (Remember, you do want them to know how you feel!)
- Listen. Ask open-ended questions and pay attention to what your flirtee says. Nothing is more attractive than someone who thinks you are fascinating.
- Smile. If you only do one of the things in this list make sure it's this one.
- Be the bearer of good news. Regaling Daily Mail histrionics about asylum-seekers or house prices will not become you. Talk about things you like and things that inspire you. And if your friend says 'I love football' and you hate it, for god's sake don't fess up.
- Make direct immediate eye contact. A frank open countenance is a good thing, an unblinking stare is not. Worse still is pretending to make eye contact when in fact you're talking to an earring or a fringe.
- Ask questions that show that you're listening and that you're really interested. Starting your sentences with 'I wonder' or 'I think...' is a sure-fire way to get the ball rolling.
- Mirror your friend's gestures. When you're chatting to someone you're interested in, your body language and gestures often synchronise. This is often an unconscious thing and not the same as mimicking, repeat not the same.
- Playing with a strand of hair, a straw or a stirrer can be alluring. Don't over-egg it though and girls, never run your finger around the rim of the glass. You'll look like a hooker.
- Leaning towards your friend sends out positive signals. And if you cross your legs make sure your knees face your friend and not the other way. The leg crossing perfected by Sharon Stone in Basic Instinct is considered a forthright gesture, recommended once you've dispensed with formalities.
- Give sincere compliments. People love to be flattered even if they pretend not to. Practice daily with colleagues, the posty or fellow supermarket shoppers.
- In conversation, casually touching your friend on the arm or hand, or brushing lint off a jacket are gestures which will be appreciated. Flicking dandruff off shoulders is never acceptable, even if they're your own.
- Sit up straight with your chin up. Slouchers looks slovenly and like they need a good shake.
- When introduced to someone shake hands, repeat their name and ask a question. Don't let the introduction just hang there or it'll wither within seconds.
- Use all of the above in moderation.
- And read on for the Don'ts!



## Don't

- Fold your arms. This gives the impression you're closed, distant or uncomfortable.
- Use pick-up lines. They are insincere, unoriginal and make the 'flirtee' feel as if they're being played.  
A simple 'Hello, I'm Mike' will do nicely.
- Put yourself down. Accept all compliments with modesty and grace.  
If you don't like yourself, how can you expect anyone else to?
- Take rejection personally. Sometimes you will hit it off, many times you'll be turned down.  
If it doesn't work out, move on.
- Use chat up lines. Fact: they don't work.
- Fidget. And men, never ever stand jiggling the contents of your pockets. It's frankly disturbing.
- Cross your arms in front of your chest. It immediately implies you're on the defensive.
- Look down when you're speaking or you'll come across as shift and paranoid.
- Punctuate sentences with 'y'know' or nervous 'huh' sounds. It smacks of a total lack of confidence.
- Bite nails, pick at cuticles or heaven forbid scrape the dirt from beneath the tips.

## When good flirting goes bad

Now that you are a super-flirt, don't think that the first person to fall for your new-found charms will automatically be The One. As the most experienced fisherman will tell you, when it comes to releasing a throwback, the key phrase is 'gently does it'



Nicci, a happy-to-be-single, admits that she'll usually just lie. 'I've been known to invent a boyfriend and occasionally give out the wrong phone number so I don't have to fend off unwanted calls later on.'

Her flatmate Samantha is more direct, saying, 'Most people can tell when there isn't a spark, but for those who can't, I just tell them straight. Usually, it's along the lines of "you seem like a really great guy, but I'm just not feeling a connection, so it's best we don't pursue it."' (Ouch.)

Ultimately, make sure that whichever method you choose to dismiss unwanted attention (even if it is in the form of the worst pick-up line ever), don't humiliate or publicly embarrass your would-be suitor - especially since the more suitable candidates will get the impression you

are completely unapproachable.

### **Flirting=fun**

Ultimately, flirting isn't really about how you look, act or what you say, but more about how you make the other person feel. With realistic expectations and a little bit of chutzpah, you will find that meeting new people and making some friends is easy as well as fun. So get on out there, shake your tail feathers and don't forget to smile!

### **Flirting floparoons**

ClubCard readers reveal some of the dodgiest pick-up lines they have ever heard.

'Those must be mirror pants, 'cos I can totally see myself in them' was pretty presumptuous. Claire, student  
'Can I buy you a drink or would you rather have the money?' The cheek! Patsy, estate agent  
'You sure must be tired, 'cos you've been running through my mind all night.' Can you say unoriginal de luxe? Deepah, accountant  
'You must be a Jamaican 'cos Jamaican me crazy!' Yawn...Lauren, personal trainer  
'So I noticed you're a girl...' Um, ja?! Kim, human resources manager





## SEXY TEXT DECODED

If you know how to send a flirty SMS, telling someone they're on your mind has never been easier. However, like flirting, there are a few basic rules of textual etiquette that - if followed correctly - should get the best results (and, hopefully, replies).

Being clever or cute will score you more points than vulgar or crude, especially if you have only just met the recipient.

Some people consider it rude to text in capital letters because this is the SMS equivalent of SHOUTING.

Sending the odd message now and then lets someone know you care, but a daily barrage of picture messages or silly rhymes just reads: desper8 (desperate).

Be careful of your tone, because without 'emoticons' (the little smileys below), messages can easily be misinterpreted and a joke may not read as funny as it sounds.

Finally, don't get upset if you don't get an immediate reply. People do switch off their phones, especially if they're in a meeting, watching a film or just plain busy.



E Z ways 2 show sum1 you think theyr gr8 (Easy ways to show someone you think they're great)

@}--\-,--- a rose    :-) friendly smile    ;-) flirty smile    ;-P cheeky tongue    {you} hug    xxx kisses

## Would Like To Meet

### The Dating Game

Being single has never seemed more problematic. There was once a time when you were seen as one of the lucky ones, footloose and fancy-free, without the unpredictable peaks and troughs of a relationship. Nowadays, it can feel like you've failed as a person without a steady partner - even worse if you're not out there, confidently and regularly dating and having amazing sex every time.

The thing is, being single can still be fun - even if you are no good at flirtatious body language, at chatting people up or at being scintillating company on a date. Just think about it: in an arena where people are bound to be taking themselves incredibly seriously, there's comedy to be had all around you.

So, consider how you could make being single fun again.



### Smiling through the pain

If you're in a bar on a night out, take a look around you. The singles stand out a mile, laughing slightly too loudly to get themselves noticed and striving to make their presence felt to any available matches around them.

Look at them again. See how ridiculous and desperate they appear. Their faces look pretty grotesque, don't they? Bask in the glory of knowing you're not that much of an attention-seeking idiot.

Laugh, I nearly cried  
Welcome people chatting  
you up as an opportunity to  
hear some top drawer  
comedy - for free. Chat-up  
lines are usually



unintentionally hilarious, especially when you repeat them back in a really deadpan voice. Then try the line out loudly on someone else nearby. It just gets funnier.

### Full speed ahead

Go to a speed dating event. They're laugh a minute: tons of people, in a room, all desperate to talk about themselves at high velocity in the hope that someone will like them. What could be funnier than the opportunities available here? Make up a ridiculous comedy persona, say "no" to everything each person says to you or, even more rib-tickling, actually listen to what they're saying to you.

### **Date game**

Go out on a date and try and do everything you're not meant to. Dress in a rubbish outfit, yawn a lot, spill dinner down yourself, get quite drunk, ask inappropriate questions - the list is endless. And if your date is even more obnoxious than you are, there's always the thrill of planning an escape route, perhaps through a toilet window.

The irony of it all

Ok, maybe we're pushing this a bit too far - being an obnoxious person isn't really to be encouraged. What is vital to remember, however, is not to take the dating game, or yourself, too seriously - it's a game, just that. And the irony is that with that in mind, you'll immediately be far more attractive, without even meaning to - and out of nowhere will appear that special person. Maybe...





## **So... How Can You Have a 100% Effectiveness With Girls?**

Yes my friends, believe it or not I can say that I have a 100% of effectiveness when I ask a girl to be my date or girlfriend.

Sex? Well, I'm not the kind of guy that gets a girl just to have sex, however, let me tell you that out of all the girlfriends that I've had, I had sex with all of them eventually and with the rest of them, well.. honestly I didn't want to but if I'd had asked them, I'm pretty sure they would have consider it.



### **So, what is my technique?**

Here it is:

**1) First of all, I'll tell you something that I recently told to a couple of friends who were suffering for their girls : "You have to be willing to lose your girl since the very beginning...."**

You'd say I'm crazy, but it's true.

You see, anything can happen and if you are willing to accept that, chances are that if for some reason you get separate, your pain will be a lot less.

**2) Do without doing, say without saying, flirt without flirting.**

This is good. When flirting a girl, don't let her feel that you are dying for her. Women have a sixth sense, they know when a guy likes her and they feel that everybody like her, so, what you should do is, be less attentive, pay attention to what she needs but don't make her feel too important.

### **Here is an example:**

Let's say, that you are at a party and somebody introduces her to you.

Tell her sincerely and SUPER INTERESTED that she's got the most beautiful eyes you've ever seen. Really, pay the most attention you can to her eyes for about 3-5 minutes, looking at "them" not at her.

The next 20 minutes do something else and don't pay attention to her eyes. She'll think that something is wrong.

Then, bring her a drink and tell her again about her eyes, and go somewhere else.

Are you following? Be attentive but, make her wonder, "why at the beginning he was so attentive and he liked my eyes so much, now he is a little cold? Aren't my eyes that beautiful?"

**3) MAKE HER LAUGH!**

Laugh is the way to true love!

***This Has Worked For Me Almost Every Time***



### Here's another tip.

Since I was in high school I did this with great results.

If there is a new girl in town and all your friends are trying to go out ore score with her. Here's what I've done.

Try not to be the number one but try to be the different one.

Everybody will try to amaze the girl doing stupid things but, you won't... You'll be the serious guy, the one who really thinks and doesn't act like a kid.

On the other side. If everybody is serious, you'll be the different one, you'll be the guy who asks her name and simple things without making her feel important.

Remember the technique in my last post!

So, don't be the #1, BE THE DIFFERENT ONE without making her feel important.

### If This Isn't Magic... I Don't Know What It Is!



Friends, if you think the techniques I've shared with you so far are just inventions or plain lies, think again... **THEY DO WORK LIKE MAGIC!** For real!

You see, sometimes I even wish they don't work so well, just like 3 weeks ago.

What happened was that the 3 of the girlfriends I had in the past sent me emails, ye they did! I didn't even remember them and haven't thought about them for long time.

The thing is that believe it or not the three of them wrote that **THEY MISSED THE WAY I TREAT THEM! HOW ATTENTIVE I WAS WITH THEM AND THAT THEY MISSED A LOT THE WAY I MADE THEM LAUGH AND ENJOY LIFE!** They even say that if there was a chance to try again to be happy together I could call the any time!

Magic?, coincidence? you can call it whatever you like. The point is that the three of them wrote almost the same.

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### *Is She Laughing Yet?*

Are you making her laugh yet?

I you aren't, well, you are missing a lot.

Anyway, what you need to do is to impress her very, very subtly. Do you remember the "do without doing... etc..? It really works.

Now, here's snippet about an article about how to impress a girl...

Be real. And realistic. You say one lie (that you are bold-faced aware you are saying), and you have just changed the game. You now have to keep track of the lie, never forget it, and know that that lie is what part of your potential relationship is now based on. For she will believe you. And one day, if you are both lucky enough to get involved, she will find out. And she will dump your ass. Or do a LOT of haranguing and how-could-yous....

What do you think?

### *The Way To True Love*

Have you watched the movie Michael with John Travolta?





I've watched that movie about 35 times! Really! It's one of my favorites.

In the movie, there is a part where Michael (Travolta) and the other three actors are driving to somewhere and Michael is making jokes all the time and laughing like crazy.

Then he says....

**"You've got to learn to laugh... It's the way to true love"**

By the way, he's trying to make a woman and a man to fall in love with each other since he is an angel.

Well, why am I telling you this?

Do you remember the step 3 of my technique to get any girl?

**MAKE HER LAUGH!**

My friend, you'll never know what this thing can do for you until you put it into practice.

By making a girl laugh you :

- keep her happy all the time.
- she'll love to be around you.
- she'll remember you when she is sad.
- she'll miss you when you are away.
- if you are trying to meet her for the first time, by making her laugh, you open the door to endless opportunities to score!



**GREAT UH!**

Believe me my friend... This technique of making girls laugh can even save marriages with difficulties.

***What If....?***

This technique is what I've used almost every time when I want to ask her to be my girl....

Remember, don't be so attentive and don't look desperate.

What I do is tell her something like this...

**"What would you do or say if I'd ask you to be my girl? would you think**

**about it?"**

Make these questions as if you were asking what's her favorite color. You know what I mean? Don't look like you are hoping with all your heart a "YES!"

Act as normal as you can.

What this indirect question does is making her think if you are asking her for real or if you are just curious.

That's the real point!

I don't know why but IT WORKS WONDERS!

**Take a good look at how you're speaking to women**

If you're tired of not getting the girl, you might want to take a look at how you're speaking to women and just what it is you're saying to them.

Your **looks are only going to get you so far** and since first impressions are *everything*, your conversational skills will be the determining factor in whether or not a woman agrees to go on a date with you. If you've ever wondered why women keep telling you no, the following article will shed some light on the common flirting mistakes you have been making and how you can avoid them from now on.



## Mistake #1: Talking too 'serious' around women

Chances are you didn't catch her eye by being Mister Serious. You were probably laughing and joking around (in other words, being yourself) with your friends. But, when you walk up to her, you think she wants to see that you are composed, sophisticated, and you can carry a mature conversation.

**Solution --** Be yourself. Don't be afraid to open with a crazy question that one of your friends just asked you. If she laughs, you're in. You don't need to walk up to her and pretend that you have it 'together.' Don't try to be something you are not -- most women can see right through it. **The less you care about the situation, the less nervous you'll be.**

## Mistake #2: Asking boring questions



So, what do you do for work? Yawn.

If you want to shoot down your chance of moving past the handshake, then keep firing off the 'Top 20 Small Talk Questions to Ask When Meeting Someone New.' It works at Christmas parties and church picnics, but not when you are trying to get the phone number of the hottie in the coffee shop.

**Solution --** Ask questions that demand more than a one-word or one sentence answer. Ask questions that might reveal something about that person. Ask questions that challenge (but certainly not insult) a person. That is how REAL conversation is started.

## Mistake #3: Communicating too directly

"I'll call you tomorrow around lunch time..." STOP, what you are doing, and leave a little bit to the imagination. Telling her every little thing takes the game out of it -- for both of you. Men constantly give away too much when they talk to women, and it works to their disadvantage. Provide too much information, and it might just be more than she wants to hear.

**Solution --** Listen more, talk less. Don't give away the details. Women are naturally attracted to the chase, so you might as well give it to her. They cannot resist wondering... "When is he going to call... Is he going to call... ??"





#### Mistake #4: Letting the conversation drag



Whoa! This is one of the most commonly committed errors by men -- talking too long and trying desperately to keep this hot chick in front of you for as long as possible. Until, of course, the conversation starts to lag and you find yourself toeing the floor in front of you, repeating things that were funny at the beginning of the conversation, and then finally the dreaded 10 seconds of silence before saying... OK, well I'll give you a call. You know what I am talking about.

**Solution --** When you get to the peak of a conversation, leave. I don't mean just walk away in mid-sentence, but while both of you are talking and laughing, just casually look at your watch and say something like, "Oh, sorry... I've got to meet a friend in about 10 minutes..." Note: Leave with phone number in hand (or at least make sure she has yours).

#### Mistake #5: Sucking up too much



You're so pretty. I love your smile. Awwww... that's so nice, but she doesn't give a damn. Interestingly, most women (especially the super-attractive ones) react more favorably to teasing rather than sucking up. Sucking up doesn't give you the backbone, and certainly doesn't exude the confidence you need to land the girl.

**Solution --** Get a backbone and make this girl realize that she isn't going to bowl you over with looks alone. Stick out your tongue, or comment on something in her teeth. You give the impression that your standards might just be a little higher than hers... she'll be intrigued to say the least... and she won't exactly know why.

#### Mistake #6: Talking without intention



If you fail to plan, then you should plan to fail. That saying is as old as dirt -- but it's true. So why would you go up to a girl without an end plan? I don't know either. Are you after her number? Do you want to give her yours? Or are you propositioning her for the evening...? No matter how you slice it, you better know where you are headed, or you are going nowhere with her. Don't just talking for the sake of talking -- that's how you end up at Mistake #4.

**Solution --** If you want to end up getting her number, then you need to talk your way into getting it. It's not a manipulation thing, but you need to work yourself into a place where it seems appropriate to ask (or to give her yours).

## Mistake #7: Don't know what to say

In reality, the other six mistakes never come into play because most men never talk to women in the first place. They have no idea what to say.

Think about it. Knowing how to talk to women is the **most powerful skill** you could ever learn if you want to flood your calendar with dates. You can't just walk up to a woman and expect to kiss her, can you? You need to learn how to talk to a woman before you can make her your girlfriend or "no strings attached" partner.

So why is learning to talk to women so important? Because women need to feel some connection before they decide to sleep with you. And the only way to do this is by... saying the right things.

**Solution** -- Simply put, knowing how to talk with women is like having a cupid's bow and arrow that you can freely "aim and fire" to captivate any woman and make her hypnotically attracted to you... anywhere, anytime.

In sum, you can't sidestep the flirting part, yet it is where most men make mistakes. The unfortunate circumstance is a constant merry-go-round of rejections, or worse, could-have-hads-but-chickened-outs. Master the art of flirting and you could see an increase in your dates with women.



## See Flirting as an art



Flirting is an interesting art that's used to generate attraction and interest from the opposite sex. It's the middleman between having a normal conversation and asking her out. Why do you want to flirt with a girl? The best reason is so that she can become attracted to you through conversation, and then you can ask her out. If you start off with a normal conversation at the beginning, she might think that you're friend material. So if you start flirting with her from the get go, she'll know that you mean business. Let's go on and learn the art of flirting.

### Tease Her

If you wanna learn how to flirt, then there's nothing more powerful than teasing. Remember when you were a little boy at the playground and you teased the little girls on the playground? That's exactly the concept you should have. When you tease her, it shows that you're confident and have a sense of humour. It does wonderful things for generating attraction. Some good examples

### Back end Compliment Her

This is a flirting concept that I always do but I don't really see other guys use. You all know what a compliment is. The problem with giving direct compliments about her is that they're very common especially if she's beautiful, and it makes you look kind of desperate. What you can do instead is combine teasing and compliments for something I call backended compliments.

"You know you look sexy in that dress, I think there's another girl somewhere wearing the same one" "I like the way you laugh, your nose kinda wiggles when you do, it's cute"

### Reverse Roles

We all know in the traditional sense that men want to get in bed with women. You should reverse the roles a little bit for fun.

"You're just buying me alcohol to get me drunk and take advantage of me aren't you?" "slow down, I know you want me but it's kinda too soon for me to go back to your place"

Flirting is an artful that you have to go out and EXPERIENCE to get better at. But trust me, you have to flirt with a girl unless you want to end up in the friend zone.



## PART II : CONVERSATION

### Making Conversation: A Skill, Not an Art



Do cocktail parties strike terror in your heart? If so, you are not alone. Although the ability to converse with others comes naturally to some, it is a skill that most of us must develop. Many women don't realize that effective conversation has little to do with what you know, but everything to do with how you present yourself. The 19th century French novelist Guy de Maupassant said it best:

"Conversation ... is the art of never appearing a bore, of knowing how to say everything interestingly, to entertain with no matter what, to be charming with nothing at all."

The ability to converse well with others is not some elusive thing, obtainable only by a chosen few. With a little elbow grease, even shy women can learn to feel comfortable speaking with anyone, about anything. Here's my tried and true formula:

#### **Make a personal inventory.**

Make a list of your personal strengths and accomplishments. Keep this with you at all times, and add to it. Review it regularly, but especially before entering social situations that usually cause you discomfort. This will remind you that you do have much to offer.

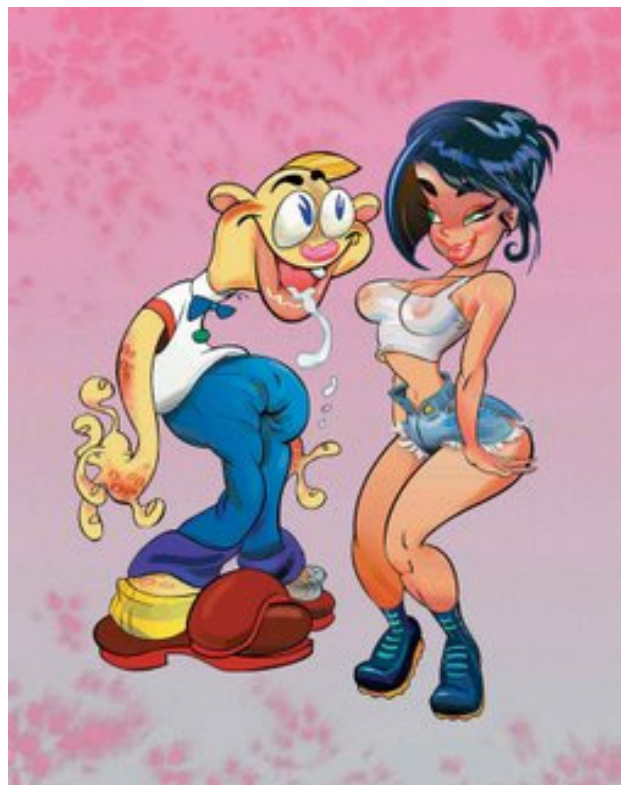
- **Ask a friend.** Request honest input from a trusted friend. How does she think you come across in social situations? What does she think you do well? How could you converse more effectively with others? Better yet, ask a couple of confidantes for their assessment of you.

- Now you are ready to make a Self-Development list. Chances are good that one or more of the following steps will address your weak areas:

- **Speak less and listen more.** People love to speak about themselves. In social situations, be sure to ask others about their interests, work, opinions, etc. This will take the focus off of you. A side benefit of this approach is that you will invariably be viewed as a great conversationalist, even though you've said little or nothing!

- **Develop your sense of humor.**

Take note of the things that make you laugh. Pay attention to what others find humorous. You don't have to be particularly quick-witted or a great storyteller in order to make others laugh. In fact, some of the funniest (and safest) material is that which is self-deprecating. As a side benefit this approach lets your listener know that you don't take yourself too seriously.



As a side benefit this approach lets your listener know that you don't take yourself too seriously.

- **Brush up on current events.** Even with limited time, you can have a cursory knowledge of what's happening in the world. Subscribe to a weekly news magazine or at least skim the headlines of a daily paper. You can even catch the news online these days! You don't have to be an expert in order to casually refer to something that is newsworthy.
- **Keep track of new and interesting experiences.** What have you recently enjoyed? A trip to a space museum? Thai food? Your first opera? Fly-fishing? New (and attention-getting) experiences will always provide fodder for stimulating conversation.
- **Be a bearer of good tidings.** Keep your comments upbeat and enthusiastic. People are instinctively drawn to positive conversation. And notice how quickly they will excuse themselves if you begin discussing your current health problems!
- **Keep your own comments short and to the point.** No one is interested in hearing you drone on about your own opinions or achievements. Brevity and humility go a long way in social situations.
- In sum, you need be neither a rocket scientist nor a brain surgeon in order to participate in lively conversation. Being a good listener is half the battle. Having fresh information to share, and delivering it with a sense of humor, is the other half. Maybe that next cocktail party won't be so bad, after all!



# **How To: Make Small Talk**

By **Justin Becker**

Lifestyle Correspondent - *Every Wednesday*



Forget about having a whole conversation with someone; the thought of making small talk, whether it's with a date, coworker or stranger, makes your palms sweat (in which case you want to avoid shaking the person's hand at all costs).

And your inability to make small talk hinders your ability to approach people in the first place. Just think about all the possibilities this eliminates. When you're standing around with someone you're not that close to, you'd rather look at your feet, play with your nails, and daydream about the other night instead of forcing yourself to make small talk. But small talk can lead to big talk, which can lead to big people, and huge opportunities.

With these tips, making small talk with anyone will no longer feel like pulling teeth (or at least won't make you feel like poking your own eyes out). The following are different scenarios and tips on how to keep the conversation going -- most tips can be used in every scenario.

## **the first date**

You and your date are sitting at a café after having seen a movie. This is always a tricky one because your small talk should lead to interesting conversation and make a great first impression (assuming you like your date).

### **Ask a lot of questions**

Asking your date many questions is always a safe thing to do, since not only does it help you get to know her and provides the basis of good conversation, but asking questions is also a turn-on for women.

Questions show that you have a genuine interest in your date, as long as you show her that you also listen to her responses (she may quiz you later, believe me).

### **Ask her questions that are:**

- ☐ Work-related: what she does; how she likes it; how long she's been working there, etc.
- ☐ Family-related: what her family's like; what they do; whether they're close, etc.
- ☐ Hobby-related: what she likes to do in her spare time; what she does on weekends, etc.
- ☐ Pop culture-related: what kind of music she likes; what her favorite movie is; whether she liked the movie you just saw, etc.

First-date conversation topics can be a whole article unto itself, but in a nutshell, keep the conversation light, interesting and **avoid** anything philosophical, sexual and personal.

## **the acquaintance**

You're at your best friend's engagement party, and a man who looks familiar approaches you and starts talking to you. You just want to scope out the single women and make your way to the bar for more vodka shots, but this guy is awkwardly standing next to you.

### **Talk about who you know and what you have in common**

If you have common ground with a stranger, use it to your advantage. Don't take the opportunity to gossip and bad mouth your mutual friends, rather use it in order to fill up space and maybe make a friend while you're at it.

If you're at an engagement party, for example, say how happy you are for the couple, and ask questions about the person's relationship with the bride or groom, like how long they've known each other.

And if you know he's a member of the same golf club, talk about your drive, slice and what happened at the club the other day.



# Five Easy Steps to Better Communication

by Jane Collingwood - February 27, 2007



Being able to express yourself clearly and being able to listen well can help you avoid a great deal of stress in your closest relationship. Unfortunately, we are more likely to communicate ineffectively with our partner just at the time when we most need to get our point across. In fact, communication itself often is a major source of difficulty.

When we feel pressured, we may not keep our partner up to date. Often we fail to listen properly because we are preoccupied. But effectively communicating our feelings and ideas can prevent unnecessary misunderstandings and tensions. It's a good idea to try to open up channels of communication as much as possible. You might need to look actively for time to talk with your partner, such as during car trips or washing dishes.

Effective communication becomes even more crucial during high-stress times such as holidays. Little things can seem much bigger on important days which come with high expectations.

Make a conscious effort to practice the following basic communication skills:

## Listening.

Effective listening requires *concentration*, *tolerance* and *sensitivity*. Concentration means focusing solely on what the speaker is saying. Tolerance involves keeping an open mind to what the other person is saying, rather than being judgmental or defensive. Sensitivity means taking on board the feelings being expressed as well as the words.



Under stress, you are less likely to listen well. It's a good habit to ask your partner to repeat what he or she has said if you doubt that you fully understood. Being a good listener means you will be kept better informed.

## Expressing yourself.

First you need to listen to yourself to know what you want to get across. If you feel confused, spend a few quiet moments going over your thoughts. Then you'll be ready to state your message clearly, honestly and constructively.

Avoid negative generalizations about the other person. In arguments, attempt to stay on the topic which is the real problem and avoid generalizing, point-scoring and venting your anger just to calm yourself down. Positive resolutions won't come from attacking.

Learn when to give feedback and how to say no to unreasonable demands.

## Interpreting body language.

It's inherently difficult to explain nonverbal communication in words. Yet it is a central form of communication. It is possible to understand how the other person is receiving your message through clues in his or her movements. We pick up on these clues all the time without realizing it, but sometimes ignore the messages.

When you are talking, watch your partner for signs of understanding, distraction, confusion or boredom and adapt your behavior accordingly. Be aware of crossed arms and avoidance of eye contact. If this is happening, you might need to alter your approach.

## Being aware of your differences.

Individuals' perceptions of the same event or piece of information can vary a great deal. Different backgrounds lead to different expectations of the world, and we tend to hear what we expect to hear. Put yourself in your partner's shoes and gear your message specifically toward him or her. Make sure it has been received accurately by asking for feedback. Also remember that many words and concepts have different meanings and so they are often open to misinterpretation.



## Resolving conflict.

Conflicts naturally will arise whenever people are living together. Conflicts can occur for many reasons including "black and white thinking," clashing standards or beliefs, unresolved childhood issues, and the background stress of modern life.

Conflicts potentially can be useful and channeled in healthy ways as long as they don't involve threats or stubbornness. They can stimulate discussion and even bring people in a relationship closer together, as long as each partner expresses his or her feelings and opinions in an honest and loving way.

Resolve conflicts by working together so that neither of you is forced to 'give in' or be dominated. Look for solutions that are acceptable to both, and keep working at it until you reach a satisfactory conclusion.

### Subject: How to start a conversation

I came upon this site and decided to ask a question and see what you have up your sleeve. I have so much difficulty in starting a conversation with women. This also causes me to have a bad first impression as well. I am always thinking what to say next and the effect is she is probably thinking I am stupid or something (which I am not of course). I can get the looks and the flirts, but when I do get the courage and talk I found she has a boyfriend. I generally continue to talk to her, but in the back of my mind I am saying, "Damn". What I am basically saying is what do you talk about when you want to get to know her?  
charlie

ANSWER: Hey, Charlie. Thanks for your question. It's an important one. The key to having a good conversation and building attraction through it is in making your conversation interesting and using humor and wit. In other words, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT, but how you talk. Sharing your interesting opinions, being sarcastic, and teasing a woman will create many good feelings between the two of you if she is cool enough to handle it. And the topics don't matter. You can just randomly start telling her: "Hey, did you see this movie? That actor is so good, he really got into the role which made me feel sorry for him" or something like that. It's very important to understand and remember that your conversation DOESN'T need to be extraordinary. Normal, non-cliche conversation will be good enough if your posture, your voice and your body radiate relaxed energy and confidence.

Thanks, and I hope this helps. If not, please follow up.

## **Marriage Myth: Communication will Solve All Your Problems**

### **Concealed issues suddenly brought to light can explode.**

Michael and Gwen enter the counselor's office and nervously take their seats. Michael fidgets and stares at the floor while Gwen sits upright, looks toward the therapist and utters the words that marriage counselors hear so frequently, they can almost say them in unison, "Doctor, we're not like most of the couples you see... we don't have any really serious problems; he doesn't drink or beat me or chase other women—nothing like that. Our problem is that we just don't communicate."

"We just don't communicate." The cry is frequent and the assumptions are clear: Communication means a better marriage; more conversation means more connection; increased interaction means increased intimacy. It all sounds logical enough—or does it?

### **Brace for fallout**

In the past, I might have rushed in with a glut of techniques to help a couple like Michael and Gwen accomplish their stated goal of better communication. But over the years I've learned that working to improve marital communication is a lot like exploratory surgery: The risk of what might be exposed is fraught with peril. Couples need to brace for the potential fallout that better communication may bring before they recklessly plunge ahead with the scalpel.

Good communication involves both partners being aware of their own thoughts and feelings and expressing them in an open, clear way. When a person communicates effectively, there is congruence between their inner experience and their outward expression. However, even an increase in direct and consistent communication doesn't insure that a relationship will improve.



Let's take television's Cleaver family, for example. If Ward started to be more open with June, maybe he would finally tell her that he doesn't like her award-winning meatloaf or share the fact that he's still upset about her quitting her job last year. He might even confess that he just lost half of their savings by making a bad investment. If June risked better communication, she might reveal her dissatisfaction with their sex life, complain about Ward's low income or disclose the fact that his inebriated brother made a pass at her last Thanksgiving.

Partners conspire to restrict and filter their interactions because they sense the danger involved in expressing themselves more openly. Once this pact of limited communication is broken, the lid of Pandora's box can blast open.



## The conspiracy not to tell



Marriages are often held together by a joint conspiracy to limit communication. In many cases, an unspoken agreement is understood by both partners at a deep level—a level of fear, safety and security. Partners conspire to restrict and filter their interactions because, deep down, they sense the danger involved in expressing themselves more openly. Once this pact of limited communication is broken, the lid of Pandora's box can blast open and an explosion of issues that were previously concealed can fill the air.

Open communication always forces unspoken needs, hurts and resentments that lie beneath the surface to spring forth. The stability and harmony that noncommunication preserved are shattered once newly voiced concerns break the calm. This disruption can certainly be a positive factor in making a marriage better,

but only if the partners are prepared and equipped to deal with the issues and conflicts that erupt.

To chance such openness, you need strong confidence in your spouse's devotion and commitment to the relationship. You need to trust that your mate is ultimately "with you" rather than "against you." You have to believe that he or she has your best interests at heart, especially when the two of you don't see things eye to eye. An atmosphere of safety and security has to exist so your opinions, needs and wishes can be revealed without threatening either your integrity or the integrity of the relationship.

## Sudden conflict

Within this context of safety, partners also need confidence in their ability to negotiate and resolve conflicts. It is essential to have a mutual commitment to finding solutions that satisfy both parties. If I have faith that my partner is invested in my happiness and well-being, then I can be free to communicate honestly without the fear of being taken advantage of, ridiculed, degraded or abandoned.

Apart from the safety of a secure relationship and confidence in the ability to negotiate conflicts, couples should be wary of simply "improving communication." The truth is, good communication in and of itself does not make a relationship better. Instead, good communication exposes conflict that when effectively dealt with, can promote a more open and intimate connection.

## How to Make Conversation or How to Kiss the Blarney Stone

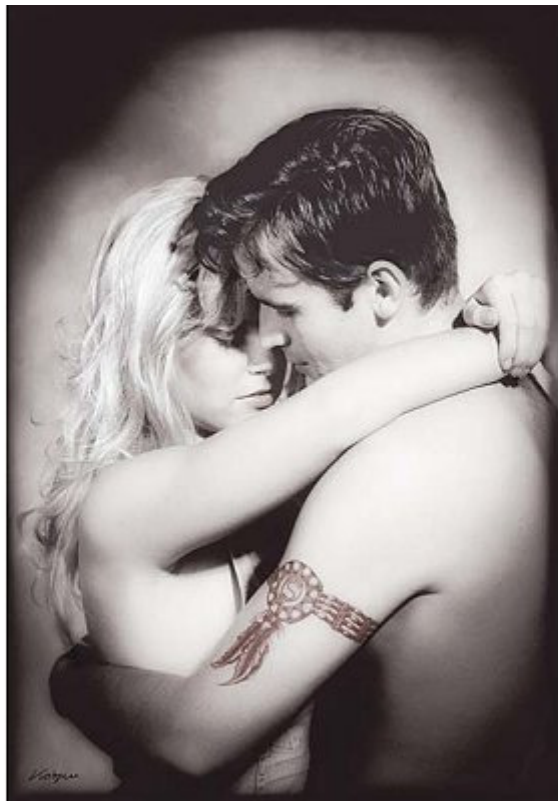


The Blarney Stone is part of Blarney Castle in Ireland and thought to be half of the Stone of Scone on which Scottish Kings were crowned. It is believed that kissing the Blarney Stone can grant you the knowledge on how to make conversation and the gift of eloquence. There's no doubt the Irish can make conversation, who are we to question tradition?

Knowing how to make conversation and having real eloquence in conversation are things many of us wish we had but travelling to Blarney Castle in Ireland and kissing a stone set in the castle battlements might not give everyone the ability to make conversation.

Better to spend your time learning how to make conversation by watching talk shows, listening to talk radio programs, attending clubs dedicated to public speaking, and listening to ordinary conversations.

### Here are a 8 tips on how to make conversation.



#### **1. Talk about what you know.**

Our words betray our knowledge. There is a well known saying "put your brain into gear before opening your mouth" and all of us, at some time, have wished we'd done exactly that. If we could limit ourselves and make conversation only on subjects we know something about we would be much safer but that is not always possible.

If you don't know about a conversation subject, listen and learn, and if asked an opinion preface it with "this is something I know little about.." then give an honest opinion. We all have our limitations, and you will be respected for your honesty. That doesn't mean we can't add to what we know or that our opinions are invalid and by listening we may be able to make conversation on the same topic another time.

When trying to understand how to make conversation remember that others respect truth and honesty not bluff and pretense.

## 2. Listen.

Learn how to make conversation by actively listening to other people and by concentrating on what they say and how they say it. It doesn't matter who or where they are. Even if you disagree with their opinions, listening to others helps you form your opinions and it provides insight as you learn how to make conversation.

Try to see how others communicate. A conversation is more than just words. As others make conversation watch their body language and listen to the variation in the pitch of their voices. Listening is very important but if all you do is listen to the words you will miss most of what they are communicating.

Learning how to make conversation is about seeing and understanding body language as well as listening

## 3. Humility

As we make conversation we all make mistakes, and sometimes we mispronounce our words, stutter or even slur words. If you realize you've made a mistake ask if you pronounced it correctly or ask if you used the word in the right context. People accept honest mistakes, however if you are always using long words just to show off they will quickly lose interest.

In understanding how to make conversation remember your audience is more forgiving than you are, don't be too hard on yourself when you make mistakes



## 4. Make Eye Contact with your Audience

When listening and speaking use eye contact to maintain a connection with your audience. It doesn't matter if you have an audience of one or one hundred maintaining eye contact keeps the in the conversation. But don't lock eyes and stare.

If you're in conversation with just one person allow them a break. Staring continuously at them will make them feel uncomfortable so look around regularly, but don't talk to your shoes or talk while facing away from them. If you are talking to a larger group exchange looks with different members of your audience while talking. Don't spend too long looking at one person and don't ignore others.

As you understand how to make conversation remember eye contact keeps your audience with you.



## 5. Smile and Inject a Little Humor

As you make conversation smile and inject a little humor into the conversation. When done well it can lift the tension, or recapture those whose thoughts have drifted away. You will retain the attention of the majority of the group or audience and they will feel more comfortable.

Unless you are a stand up comedian don't crack jokes as more often than not they will have been heard before and aren't that funny. It is much better to tell humorous stories based on your experiences but don't laugh hysterically at your own stories. Allow others to appreciate them without being embarrassed at your behaviour.



In understanding how to make conversation don't forget humor and a smile can capture an audience.

## 6. Get Involved in Social Groups.

Join groups where the need to make conversation is inevitable. Whether that's a night school drama course, a course to improve your public speaking, salsa lessons or a group or society related to a hobby or your work. Get out there and talk to lots of different people. Listen to them, and you'll get a lot of ideas, as well as clues on how they make conversation.

As you begin to understand how to make conversation practice is essential so go out and get involved.

## 7. Me, Myself, and I

Admit it, there are times you sing to yourself in the shower or the bath and you think of yourself as the next Frank Sinatra or Eva Cassidy. Leave those dreams and opinions in the bathroom! Similarly as you make conversation don't inflate your own ego by continually talking about yourself.

If you do your audience will switch off and you will soon find yourself talking to yourself. Involve others, by asking their opinion and give them a chance to talk. Don't belittle their opinions, give others the respect you like others to give to you.

In learning about how to make conversation don't forget that you are not the most important person there, your audience is, so don't spend the evening talking about yourself.

## 8. Practice, practice, practice

If you are going somewhere important, where conversations are inevitable, and you feel uncomfortable then preparation is essential. Think of a few anecdotes and stories and write them out before you go. Think of the questions you would like to ask others. Write them down and then write out your answers to the same questions. Now if you are asked you can deliver a more relaxed answer.





Any questions you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable answering, cross off your list and don't ask. If you are embarrassed your audience probably will be too. Organise the remaining questions and answers and re-write them. Then leave them at home. The process of asking and answering the questions should be enough preparation.

Until you fully understand how to make conversation and become comfortable with it then practicing at home before you go out is ok. It will help you relax and make conversations easier.

Knowing how to make conversation and being confident in the company of others is difficult for many people. Few excel at it and the majority just about cope. As with anything else being confident is all about knowledge and experience.

If you feel uncomfortable it simply means you are outside your comfort zone and you need more practice. Follow these simple ideas and, over time, you will gain eloquence and be able to make conversation, you will relax and become comfortable

in the company of others.

**Written By: John Edmond**

## **Improve Your Communication Skills for Dating**

We live in a time in history when communication is simpler than ever before. That is to say, a time when it is easier to contact and exchange communications with anyone, anywhere in the world. In spite of this communicative global community created by the Internet, our ability to effectively communicate with each other is wavering. Perhaps the following explanation of four levels of communication will help.

Have you ever been to a function in a room full of strangers and found yourself lost for words? It can be a very lonely experience, especially if you intend to date.

The art of introducing yourself to others and creating small talk may come naturally for some, but most people confess to feeling shy, embarrassed and don't know where to start. Your inner ambitions are crying out for you to relate to others – just as other people are deeply interested to know you.

### **The key to knowing where to start is to understand the four levels of communication.**



#### **1. Small Talk**

When you meet someone for the first time, the safest place to start is to talk about surface issues. For instance, make a comment about the weather, current events, or the surroundings you are in while you are speaking.

This is called “small talk”, and is used to “size up” the other person, and to determine the comfort zone between the two of you. There is no need to disclose any personal information with the other person at this stage, as this initial interaction assists you to determine how “safe” they are on your first meeting.

If you are comfortable engaging each other at a surface level, you can easily slip into the next level of communication: fact disclosure.

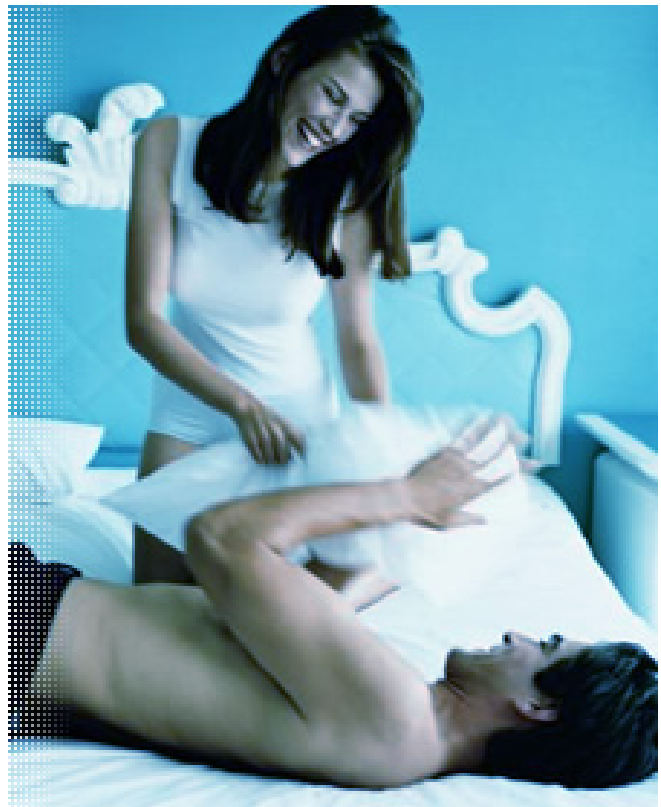
## 2. Fact Disclosure

This level of communication is slightly deeper than small talk in that you disclose facts about yourself without triggering topics of emotional interest.

The purpose of fact disclosure is to find out if you have something in common. You can use these common areas to build a bridge of friendship later on. You may want to talk about your career or occupation, hobbies, where you live, etc.

Avoid topics like marriage, divorce, politics, sex, and religion in this second level of communication. With a little creative thinking, and the use of open-ended questions, you should easily find a topic that interests you both.

If you find a topic of mutual interest then you may choose to progress to the next level of communication: sharing viewpoints and opinions.



## 3. Share Viewpoints and Opinions

Once you have established that the other person is “safe” through small talk, and the two of you have found areas of common interest, you can build rapport by sharing your opinions and viewpoints.

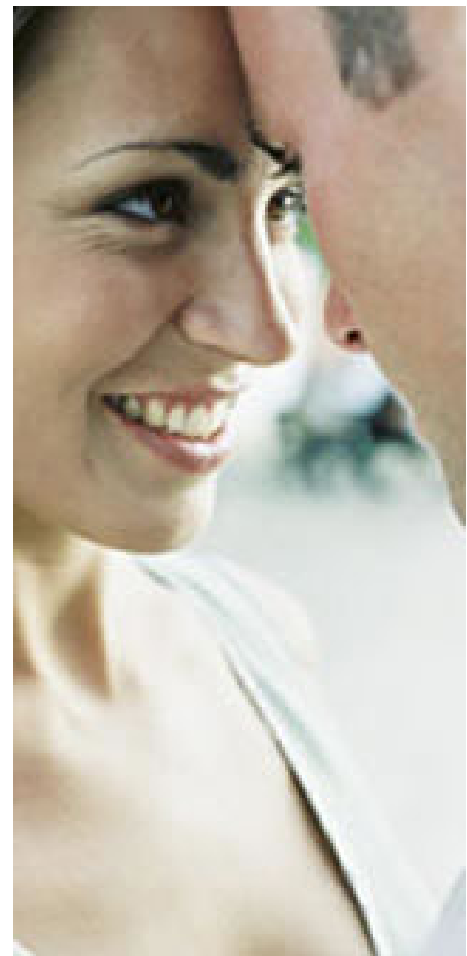
By sharing your viewpoints and opinions you allow yourself to become vulnerable to the scrutiny and objections of the other person, so you would only enter this level of communication once you were comfortable that you both share positive feelings through the first two levels.

Some people give an opinion about politics or religion as their starting point at this level. But you may prefer to start by commenting on the things you have in common – the things that you found through fact disclosure. This is usually a safe place to start.

Be prepared to listen to the opinions of your new friend. It is just as important to listen to their viewpoint as it is that they listen to yours. This tempered, accepting exchange will enable your friendship to survive – and perhaps move forward.

Make sure you don’t use your opinions as a form of “character assassination” of other people. You may be thought of as a negative person and this may cause your new friend to put distance between the two of you.

Over time you will learn to find a safe distance in your communication levels, and if you are forming a genuine bond of friendship, you may eventually enter into the fourth level of communication: sharing personal feelings.





#### 4. Share Personal Feelings

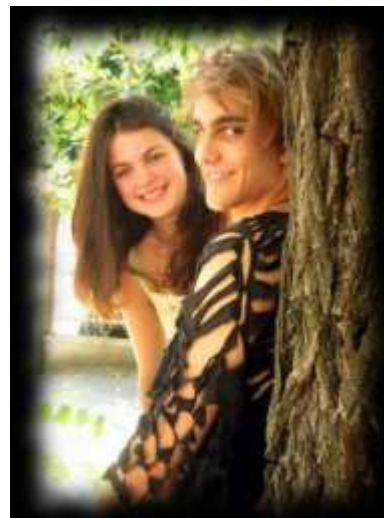
Only solid friendships survive time to enter the fourth level of communication. After building upon trust, finding things in common, and listening to the viewpoints and opinions of others, you may be able to (safely) share your personal feelings.

This is where an acquaintance becomes a genuine friend. You know that despite having differing opinions and viewpoints you can trust your friend's judgment, and that you may even go to them for advice.

At this level, things of deep value to you can be shared without feeling threatened. You listen closely to each other without the need to "solve" your friend's problem. You are happy to reflect their feelings back to them – forming a bond of empathy and compassion between the two of you.

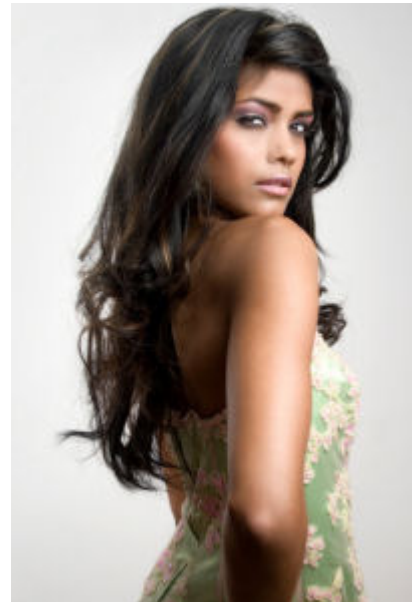
At this level of communication, it is important that you provide a little distance between yourself and your friend. If the distinction between yourself and your friend becomes unrecognizable, it is possible for your relationship to go sour. If you know how to handle your own feelings, attitudes and behaviors, while maintaining your friendship at this level, you will build a successful friendship that can last a lifetime.

By using these four levels of communication with prospective dates, and while on dates, you will find that they will become interested in you, and want to get to know you all the more.



# Flirting tips for ladies

Every woman has a sexy flirt inside of her capable of getting a man's attention. However, not all women carry the self confidence or know-how on bringing this flirtatious side out. Flirting plays a big part in the dating world. In fact, you cannot score a date with any man unless you give them the green light- a sign that expresses that we are interested in them. After all, women are not the only ones struggling with doubts and insecurities about themselves. Men also feel insecure and unsure on how to put themselves out there. They are afraid of reading a woman wrong, fear getting rejected and are also intimidated by women they find very attractive. So, if you see a man you think is attractive and you want to get the communication started, you have to help the boy out a little! By helping him out, you will help yourself out too- because you like him and want to talk to him, so let the flirting begin ♦



Flirting does not have to be very aggressive. It depends on your personality. If you naturally a shyer person, then you will want to be quieter with your flirting, but still send out a strong message. If you are not all that shy and you have a more aggressive personality, then you can be more obvious and vocal with your flirting. Here are some flirting tips you can use the next time you see a guy you want to acquaint and get to know better.

## **Shy Girls:**

### **1. Make eye contact with a smile.**

If you come across a man that catches your eye, look at him in the eyes and give him a gentle smile. The smile is an invitation, letting him know that you are open to be friendly with him.

### **2. If he smiles back, Turn Around!**

Once you make contact and smile at him, the ball is in his court. He smiles back, keep walking. After a few second, slowly turn around and smile at him again. He most likely will be checking you out if he finds you attractive, so he will see this and will smile back at you again. If he has the courage, he will come up to you and start talking- and you can take it from there.

### **3. Swirl your feet**

If you are sitting down when you see a man you like, then give him a friendly smile and swirl one of your feet around slowly if you are wearing a skirt. The smile and eye contact will let him know you are into him, but swirling your foot will draw his attention to your legs and he will be even more curious about you. Remember, men are visual creatures, so make sure he sees your physical qualities. If you are sitting but are not wearing a skirt, then you can do something else to draw his attention to your physical sexiness! For example, you could tilt your head slightly upwards and rub your neck a little, as if you do not know he is looking, but in fact he will be watching you rub your sexy neck!



## **Not so Shy Girls:**

### **1. Stare and Speak!**

When you see a man you like, the eye contact rule still applies, since eye contact is the most powerful tool when trying to connect with someone. However, if you are not that shy and do not mind taking a bolder step, you can also speak to him as he walks by, or as you walk by him. You can flirtily say hello in a soft voice and smile as he says hello back, gently looking him up and down. This will make it obvious to him that you are interested, without being too aggressive and over doing it- but definitely flirty enough!

### **2. Start Conversation**



are a happy, non-threatening flirting woman. Plus, smiling brightens your face and gives him a chance to see your real beauty!

If you are willing to make the first move and make your intentions even more obvious, without actually throwing yourself at him, you can start a conversation with him. Come up with an excuse to talk, such as asking for directions, an opinion on something- or even to borrow his pen- whatever it takes to get the two of you talking. If he is interested in you as well, you will not have to work too hard, because he will be friendly and flirty right back at you! You two can talk and then take it from there.

### **3. Give or Ask for Digits!**

Face it- if you just ran into this guy by chance- then there is a high chance you may not see him again- unless one of you take a bold move. If you do not have a problem making bold moves, you can ask him for his phone number (if he does not beat you to it first), or you could write down your number and hand it to him with a smile. If there really is chemistry between you, then he will want to be in touch with you again- as soon as possible!

Remember: Regardless of whether you are shy or more aggressive, one of the most important and most attractive things a woman can do is Smile! It gives a friendly vibe and shows him that you